

GOKULAM

The monthly magazine for children



JANUARY '95 ♦ Rs. 5

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Of all created things, the loveliest
And most divine are children.
— William Canton.

Vol. VII

No. 7



GOKULAM

January 1995

Dear Children,

Within each one of us, is a constant urge to create. What is this feeling within us, that always wants expression?

The method of expression is different for all of us.

Some of us want to paint, some of us want to carve, others want to cartoon, photograph, some others just want to lie on the grass and dream into space.

All these activities in themselves are good for us. They help take away the tension of everyday life (Did I do my homework? What marks will I get? Why did sister and I fight today?), and help us relax.

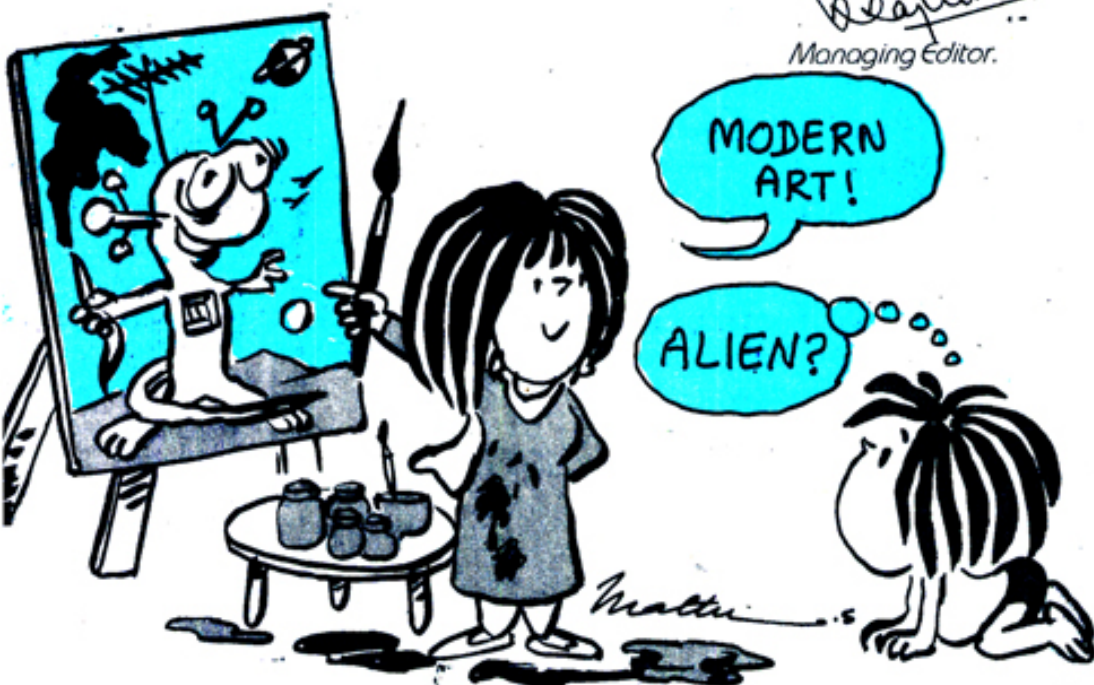
We need these activities too, to make our lives complete.

How is that, you may ask. We live and grow through experience. And just school and studies do not form experiences. Experiences are the way we deal with others, the way we make friends, the way we learn from incidents, the way we are able to understand ourselves....

All this is creativity too.

Make a space for yourself in time, when you can give expression to the creativity you want. When you grow out of text-books and school, it is this creativity that helps you along.

Love,
Rajula
Managing Editor.



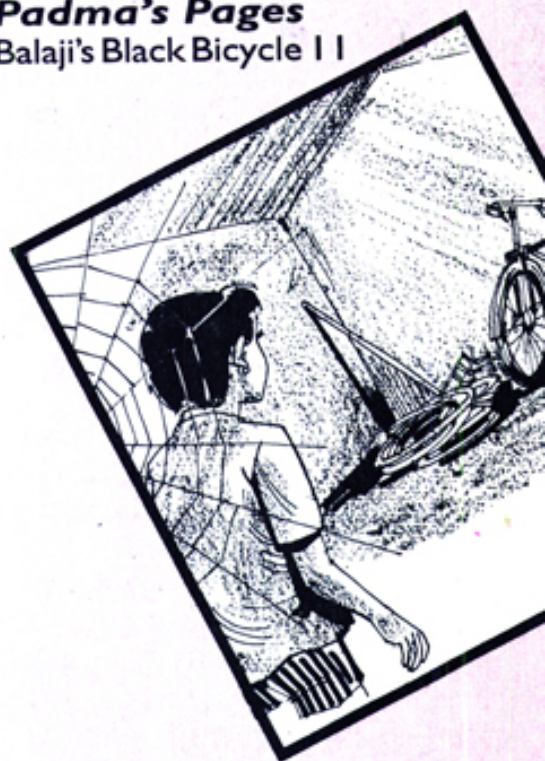
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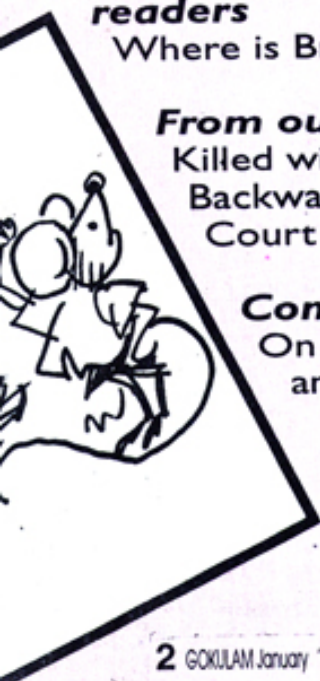
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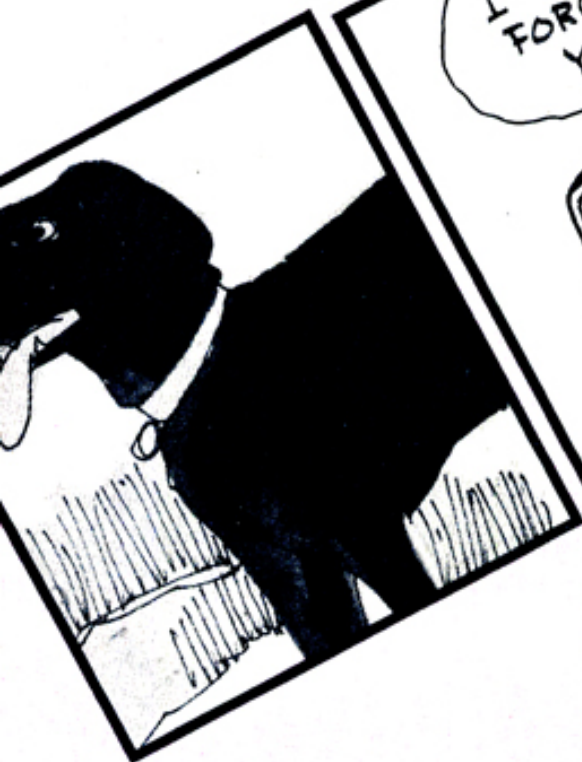
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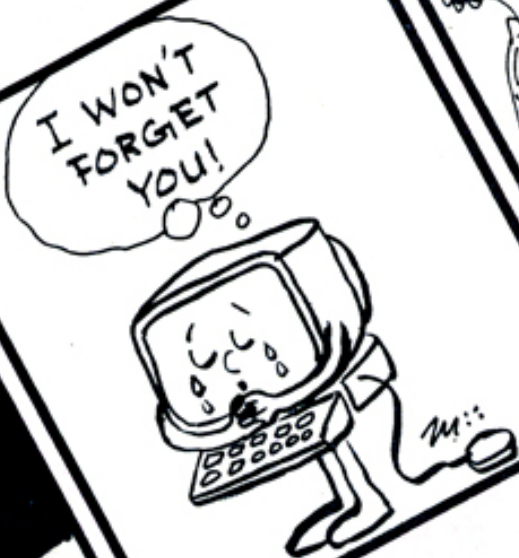


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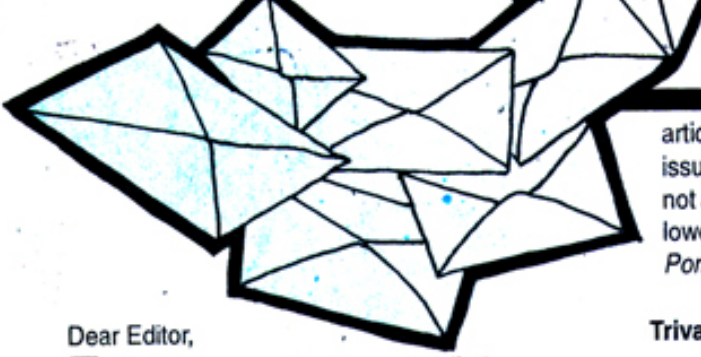
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Watch out for the
results of 'The
Accident' -
**COMPLETE THE
STORY
COMPETITION** in the
next issue!

Cover Illustration : Chellam



article, *My City* in the November issue. He had said that men are not allowed at Attukal. Men are allowed at Attukal, except during the Pongala festival.

**R. Lalitha, aged 10,
Trivandrum and Athul U., aged 7,
Cochin.**

Dear Editor,

☒ I have a request to all our contributors. Please write your full name and address clearly on your articles.

I feel sorry for the editor, when I see his little notes asking for addresses, below many articles in the magazine.

**A. Angelin Sophia, aged 11,
Trichy - 620 001.**

Dear Editor,

☒ I find Appu becoming a cruel, disobedient and rude little elephant. Please ask him to change his ways.

**R. Anita, aged 13,
S.K.M.H.S. School, Madras.**

Dear Editor,

☒ This is with reference to the story *Pandora's Box* in the November issue. The story clearly says that Mercury wore winged shoes. But in the illustration, Mercury is shown barefoot with wings.

**Avinash H. Mudaliar,
Madras.**

*Your eagle eyes detected our blunder,
Avinash. Sorry!*

Ed.

Dear Editor,

☒ I found a small mistake in Sabarinath's

Dear Editor,

☒ I study in a British school in Bahrain. My British friends enjoy reading *Gokulam*. I am called the joke-teller of the class. Do you know why? I always read out jokes from *Gokulam* to the class.

**Maythini Sridharan, aged 10,
St. Christopher's,
Bahrain.**

Dear Editor,

☒ My younger sister always quarrels with me for nothing at all. I like her very much,

MY GOD! THIS IS
9999th TIME!



LETTER BOX

and I feel bad every time she quarrels with me.

I feel very jealous of my friends who have nicer younger sisters. I want her to stop quarrelling with me. Can you solve my problem?

**S. Kaviprasanna, aged 12,
Rosary Matric, Madras.**

Dear Editor,

✉ I was really zapped when I read *Radio Battle* by Narmada in your November issue. We had been suffering from the same problem too. Our neighbour's 'monster' begins its noise at 6 am and shuts up only at midnight. Our parents tried talking to them, saying that their playing the radio at such a high volume disturbed us. But in vain.

Then came Diwali. And guess how we solved the problem? We went to our neighbours' house and gave them sweets. We

**DON'T
BECOME
RUDE...**



Many readers had solutions to Sujatha's problem which was aired in our November issue. Here are

some of them.

✉ I agree that text-books are boring. Pay careful attention to the teacher's explanations in class. You'll find lessons quite interesting when you read them again.

**Usha Raman,
Bangalore - 54 and
K. Kavitha,**

Auxilium School, New Delhi.

✉ I love comics too. But remember your marks depend on your studies. When you think of your marks, a fear strikes you — take advantage of this fear, and switch over to studies.

**R. Swarnalatha, aged 16,
Madras - 90.**

✉ Discuss your lessons with your friends. You'll remember them better.

**B. K. Archana, aged 14,
Kendriya Vidyalaya,
Kudremukh.**

✉ Concentrate on lessons while studying. Get somebody to put small questions on the subject, to you, after that.

**Beena P. Shetgoankar, aged 15,
Goa.**

haven't heard the 'monster' since then. So, before you solve a problem tit for tat, remember, there are non-violent ways of doing it too.

**Bindu V.,
Trivandrum - 695 009.**

**TWO
SUGGESTIONS!**



Here are some questions that have tricky answers. Choose the answer that suits you best and put a tick mark on it.

1. Have you ever noticed cloud



formations? What does this one look like, to you?

- a) An elephant
- b) A pineapple
- c) Nothing at all

2. When you read a story, do you....

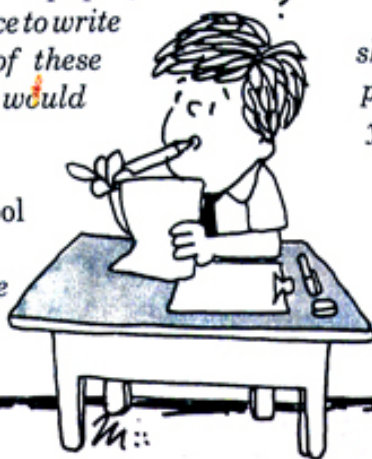
a) get so involved in it that you forget everything else?

b) enjoy it, without getting involved?

3. In your exam paper, you're given the choice to write an essay on any of these topics. Which one would you choose?

- a) My dream
- b) A day at school
- c) A horse

4. You like painting pictures. Do you...



a) Copy from a painting or greeting card?

b) Paint what you see around you?

c) Paint from imagination?

5. When you choose a book to read, do you

a) Choose one that has pictures in it?

b) Choose a comic?

c) Choose any good book that looks interesting?

6. Imagine you are a wild boar being chased by a lion. How would you escape?

a) I would think of some trick to outwit the lion.

b) I would turn around and fight the lion.

c) I don't know.

7. Do you like to daydream?

a) Yes.

b) No.

8. What do you think happiness is?

a) It is a state of mind.

b) It is getting all the things you want.

9. You are given a sheet of blank white paper. What will you do with it?

a) You make a boat or a plane with it.

b) You paint on it.

c) You stow it



carefully away in a drawer.

10. *Just suppose you are the new editor of 'Gokulam'. And you are asked to improve it, you would,*

a) Try to give better stories and pictures.

b) Think it's okay as it is, and continue do the same.

Finished? Now this is how you score yourself. Give yourself one point for each answer, if you have ticked **a** for 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

Give yourself one point for each answer if you have ticked **b** for 1, 3, 4, 6 and 9.

If you have ticked **c** for 4 and 5, give yourself a point for each answer.

Now total the number of points you have.

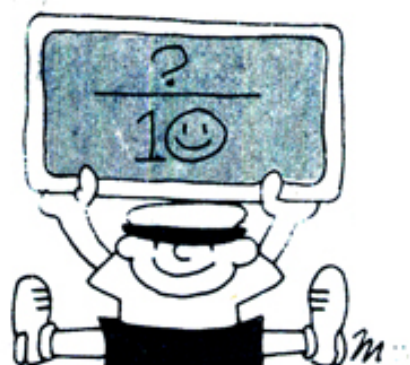
This is how you evaluate yourself.

8 points and above — you are a very creative and imaginative person!

6 points and above — you are

COVER ARTICLE

TICK 'N' TELL!



creative, you can do better.

4-6 points — average. You have more scope for creativity.

Below 4 points — you need a little loosening up!

SANDY



HOW CREATIVE ARE YOU?



Whoops! We are not talking about guns. We're talking about cameras!

Photography is a very expensive creative medium, even for the die-hard camera buffs. But hard work always overcomes obstacles. To those of you who are interested in this subject, P.C. Sriram, the well-known cinematographer has some pointers to give.

Sivasankari and Anand, of the eighth standard in Padma Seshadri School, Madras, are two such enthusiasts. They went through a student's training programme in photography,

BE TRIGGER HAPPY!

held by Exnora and Kodak. They met Sriram in an interesting encounter...

Sivasankari: What is the art of photography?

Sriram: Hmm... First, tell me, what did you two shoot

during your training?

Sivasankari: I snapped an elephant.

Anand: I photographed a pair of parrots...

Sriram: Why did you shoot them?

Sivasankari: It was a beautiful sight.

Anand: I would say the same too.

Sriram: Exactly! That's what photography is about. It is the language to convey the beauty we see around us, to others.

Anand: We were given cameras during our training. Are they like the one you use?

Sriram: They are different. It is enough for beginners like you to have ordinary cameras. First, you learn just to click a picture. Then, gradually, you get ideas that a picture may look better taken this way or that...

Sivasankari: We speak of aperture and speed adjustment... What are they, exactly?

Sriram: Compare the aperture of the camera, to the pupils of our eyes. The pupil shrinks in bright light. It remains normal in normal light. And in dim light, the pupil expands. In a camera, we narrow or widen the aperture according to the intensity of the light.

Speed adjustment depends on the movement of the subject photographed and also on the light available. It is the number of times the shutter of a camera can open and close in a given second. We learn to use the correct speed and aperture only by practise.

Sivasankari: What about the cameras with automatic adjustments?

“
It is the
language
to convey
the
beauty
we see
around us,
to others.
”





PLEASURES OF RAIN

The rain is all set,
To fall on the soil and make it wet,

The rain falls wide and far,
It even washes my daddy's car!
Rain, rain! Oh! pleasant rain,
Washes away our discomforts and
pain.

One can even see the frog,
Croaking and dancing on the log,
The birds and animals at the zoo,
Seeing the rain, feel happy too.
I experience joy and fun,
In the rain, when I walk or run.
Rain gives only gain,
To forests, mountains and plains.

Omkar Ram, aged 14,
Bhopal - 462 021.

Sriram: Those who really want to learn photography should not use automatic cameras in the beginning. They should learn to make every little adjustment themselves.

Anand: How should a photograph be?

Sriram: That depends on the purpose for which it is taken. For example, passport size photographs should show the face of the subject clearly.

If you are taking a photo of a traveller resting under a tree, make sure you are able to capture the blinding sunlight, the things that he has with him... Only then will people know that he is a traveller taking rest under the shade of a tree. If these details are not there, the photograph

will just show an old man sleeping under a tree, nothing else.

Anand: How do we choose what to photograph?

Sriram: It depends on your own taste. There are photographers who shoot only sports or wildlife or fashion...

Sivasankari: What basic qualification should a photographer have?

Sriram: Patience! You can't learn photography in a day, week or a year. You go on learning all the time. And keep your camera clean. It is important, for it affects the quality of your photograph.

Compiled by Chandramouli
Photograph : Yoga.

PADMA'S PAGES

BALAJI'S BLACK BICYCLE

Beginning this month,
Padma will write some
interesting stuff for you.
Watch out for her pages!

A beam of sunlight fell on Balaji's face. He opened his sleepy eyes. It took him a while to remember where he was. Of course! — in his own little bedroom in the new house!

He had spent the previous day helping his family move from the rental apartment where he had lived since he was little, into this house.

"It's not really a new house," thought Balaji. "Just new to us."



The house had been built nearly two hundred years ago, during the time of the British Raj. In front, there was a tiny fish pond and a rose garden. Behind the house grew a few fruit trees. Against the back wall were the dilapidated remains of an old outhouse.

"What a lovely, sunny Sunday," Balaji said aloud, "I can explore the garden."

He wolfed down his breakfast of hot *idlis* and *sambhar*, and ran outside. He watched the fish in the pond for a while, but it was a little boring. They didn't do very much, just swam around in circles. He went to the back and climbed some of the trees. After a few hours, he grew tired of this too.

"What shall I do after lunch?" he wondered. He decided to investigate the outhouse.

He had to use all his strength to pull back the rusty bolt on the door. It finally creaked open, revealing a dusty interior. Balaji sneezed twice, as his eyes began to adjust to the darkness.

"Hmm...., there isn't much in here," he thought. The sunlight dripped in through little holes in the roof. In the corner lay a rake, festooned with cobwebs, and the coils of an old water hose.

He was about to leave when he spied the black bicycle.

"Look!" he cried, "There's an old bicycle in here. Maybe it still works."

It was rusty. The black paint was peeling off in places. The seat moved up and down, unless you sat in just the right place. The tyres had no air in them. The lamp didn't function.

"I'll take it inside and ask *appa* if he can help me fix it."

Balaji worked on the bicycle for a week. He polished it and oiled it and his father helped him replace the tyres and repair the lamp. He kept the bicycle on the verandah outside his room.

"I wish you were shiny and new and blue, but I like you just the same," Balaji said to the bicycle that night.

"That's good because I like you too."



"What? Who's there?" asked Balaji, a little worried.

"Don't be frightened. It's just me, Kutti the bicycle," came the voice again.

Balaji looked around. There was no one in sight. It was — it couldn't be — it was the bicycle!

"Er... Hello! Kutti bicycle," said Balaji nervously.

"Thanks for fixing me up," said Kutti, "I guess you must be quite surprised to hear me talk. I'm a magic bicycle, you know. I was made in the days of penny farthings and bone shakers."

"Who and who?" asked Balaji.

"Penny farthings and bone shakers," Kutti repeated. "Penny farthings were some of the first bicycles ever invented. You can see them in circuses sometimes. They had one huge wheel in front and a little one behind and were very difficult to balance on. Then came bone shakers. They had metal wheels that rattled your bones when you rode on them."

"I, however," continued the bicycle, "am one of a kind. I was made by a magician who had a lot of fore-sight. That's why I have rubber tyres. I came to

India when the magician's grandson moved here, two hundred years ago. He was the one who named me Kutti. He was a nice lad. Never had any children though. So after he died, I was left in the shed and forgotten."

"I promise I won't forget you," said Balaji, "I'll take good care of you always."

"Thank you. By the way, do



you fly?"

"No," said Balaji, puzzled.

"You do want to learn don't you?" asked the bicycle sternly.

"Learn to fly? On you? Yes, I do!" exclaimed Balaji, pinching himself to see if he was dreaming.

"Get on then," said the bicycle. "Hold tight."

So Balaji climbed onto the bicycle and pedalled. It lifted into the air with a violent jerk that made him fall off.

"Don't worry. One month of practice and you'll be ready to go high up in the sky," said Kutti

reassuringly.

"Where can you take me?" Balaji asked excitedly.

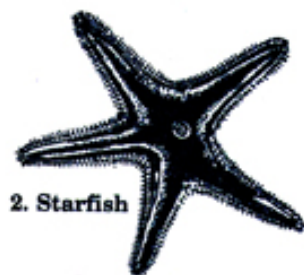
"Anywhere you like, almost. Go to sleep now. You have a whole month to think of which place you'd like to visit first."

To be continued.

—PUZZLE—

FISHY FACES

Here are pictures of five sea creatures. Do you know which of them are fish?



2. Starfish

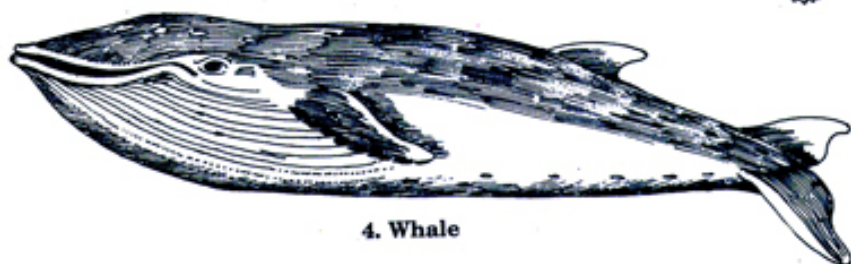


5. Jellyfish

1. Sea horse



3. Shark



4. Whale

Answers :
1. It's oddly shaped, but it's a fish!
2. An *echinoderm*. This group of animals have no backbone and show live sided symmetry.
3. This is a fish too, but instead of bone, it's skeleton is made of cartilage (the substance that gives shape to our ears).
4. This is a mammal, like us. Seals and dolphins are also marine mammals.
5. Another wrongly named creature. It's a *coelenterate*, a backboneless creature with stinging cells.

Meet CHITRA

CHITRA THE CRAB, LIVED IN A SEA-GRASS MEADOW, CLOSE TO THE SEA-SHORE.

ONE DAY —

Hello, little starfish!

STARFISH PREFER TO BE CALLED SEA-STARS, SINCE THEY'RE NOT REALLY FISH.

Go away! Don't call me starfish! I am not a fish! I don't like fish!

Sorry....

...I only stopped to talk to you because you seem sad.

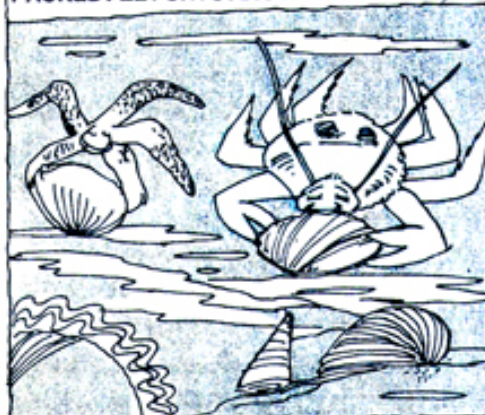
I am sad. A school of fish just came by. They made fun of me because one of my legs is shorter than the other four.

Yes. If a big fish bites those fish, they're finished.

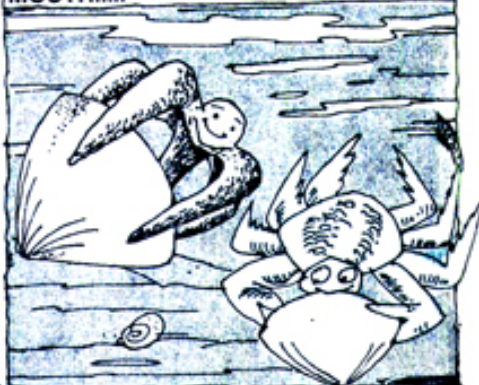
Don't worry! The fish are just jealous 'cause we can grow our legs if a big fish bites them off.



AS CHITRA CHEWED ON HER CLAM, SHE WATCHED SOMU STICK HIS SUCTION-CUP PACKED FEET ONTO ANOTHER ONE'S SHELL.



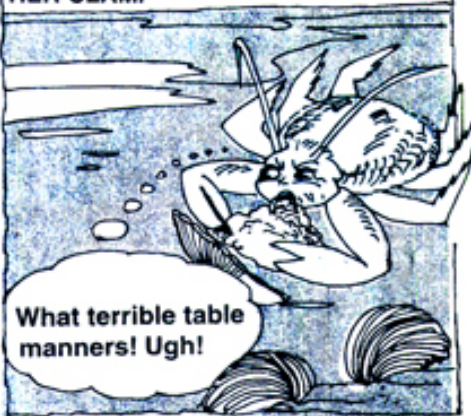
SOMU PRISED APART THE TWO SHELLS OF THE CLAM. BUT, INSTEAD OF PUTTING A BIT OF THE CLAM IN HIS MOUTH.....



.... HE PUSHED HIS STOMACH OUT OF HIS MOUTH, INTO THE CLAM!



CHITRA POLITELY SAID NOTHING. BUT SHE FELT TOO SICK TO FINISH HER CLAM.



WHERE IS HARISH?

A small colour TV was placed on a corner table, next to a window. A half-opened bag of chips, half-drunk glass of cola, and some fruits, lay on a table next to a comfortable looking diwan bed.

There was plenty in the room to keep an eleven-year-old boy reasonably happy. But Harish Rangarajan was a prisoner, and not all the comics, or WWF

In a small bungalow, a bored and puzzled boy turned the pages of an Asterix comic, wondering when, if ever, his captors would let him go home. The bungalow was situated in a quiet suburb of Madras. A stack of comics and story books stood next to the boy, who was sitting on the floor.



wrestling programmes, or games and toys, could make him forget it. Even his favourite magazine *Gokulam*, lay thrown to one side.

The door to the room was not shut. But the man who sat playing cards with himself in the outer room was a

THE

SHAKUNI PLAN 4

burly one. His muscles bulged out of the short arms of his black T-shirt. There were two other men. One cooked food that Harish might have found tasty in normal times. One prowled in the garden along with his dog — a huge, sleek, black Dobermann Pinscher.

Harish was terrified of dogs. And this one, who answered to the name Dan, had such long and large jaws that Harish shuddered even when he just saw Dan panting. The sight of the dog cured any desire of his to run out into the garden.

He didn't know where he was. It might be very close to home, or it might be another city. He could see nothing of the outside locality. His window showed green bushes, and a hibiscus shrub outside, against a high garden wall.

Sometimes, Harish heard the faint noise of other TV's. He knew houses were close by. In the mornings and evenings, he heard cars and scooters rush past on the road beyond the wall. But he was sealed in, boxed by his burly captors.

A thousand times he wondered what they would do to him. Why had they kidnapped him? How could these men, whom he had never met, wish to harm him? They never spoke to



him, except to ask questions like, "Would you like *payasam* with your lunch?" or "Why haven't you used this blanket? It's quite cold at night."

Harish could discover nothing in their speech that would reveal the identity of the man who had ordered his capture.

He spent his days like a bird in a golden cage. He was treated with politeness, but grew more and more frightened about his fate. A hundred times a day he cursed himself for falling into the cunning trap the kidnappers had laid for him.

Harish was picked up from school daily, by his father's car driven by their driver



Seetharaman. When he had come out of school, and been confronted by a friendly man whom he recognized as being from his father's office, he had suspected nothing. The man said that Seetharaman had taken his mother and sister to his father's office for a function, and his father had sent him to bring Harish too, to the office. Harish had walked up to the blue Fiat and got in, and soon after, a handkerchief had been pressed against his mouth and nose.....

He next became conscious in the room where he sat now. What had become of Seetharaman he wondered. He had never let the family down. His grey head in the front seat had been Harish's

guarantee of security from the time that he could remember. Harish hoped the kidnappers had not hurt him.

Another evening was coming to an end. Harish felt homesick and sad. He wished with all his heart that he could be back home, being pestered by his sister Hema. If he ever got back home, he would never mind her inquisitive questions and jealous tantrums, he decided.

Abhay had felt unsettled ever since his visit to Harish Rangarajan's house. The ransom note and the photographs he had seen at Harish's home, made him aware of some connection this kidnapping had with his karate class.

He had attended another evening of karate class, but had not confided in any of the seniors. There were so many thoughts in his head, but what did they all add up to? Harish's uncle was a *karateka*, at least, once upon a time. The ransom note and threatening letter had probably been written by the same person. But who was he? Abhay didn't want to make any dangerously wrong guesses.

He was thinking deeply, cycling back home from school. Prakash had turned into the lane where he lived. Abhay stopped at a stationery store to buy some

instruments that had broken in his geometry box.

As always in a stationery shop, Abhay was lost for a while in trying out different pens and looking at fluorescent inks, self-address labels, spiral bound notebooks and other equally attractive things. Next to the shop, was a restaurant, an air conditioned one, that was open late into the night.

A van came to a smooth stop behind Abhay. He heard the click of the passenger door, and turned around to see it sliding open.

The red van was decorated with eye catching black stickers depicting martial arts postures.

The side of the van said, 'TOBURYU : THE FINEST KARATE TRAINING'. Abhay realized with a slight jolt, that he was coming face to face with Peter Masilamani.

Peter stepped out of the van. His black and red headband held back hair that reached his shoulders. His tall and broad frame was clothed in black jeans and a cream coloured shirt. As he moved to enter the restaurant, two lanky disciples walked a few steps behind him. He paused at the restaurant entrance and turned to the van.

"Muthu," he called, "We should be free in another hour



here. Won't be much longer." Then with a nod at the man driving the van, he entered the restaurant.

Abhay looked at the driver of the van, who had nodded at Peter, and was preparing to drive away. Even in half profile, he recognized the frizzy bleached hair, the slightly prominent front teeth that had a gap in them. It was the man from the tournament.

With shaky hands, Abhay attached his purchases to his cycle carrier. The driver of the van had not cast even a glance at him, he knew. He looked very different wearing his school uniform, from when he wore his karate clothes. The man named Muthu could not possibly have recognized him.

But Abhay's hands were shaking, because it was he who had recognized Muthu. A younger Muthu, with black hair instead of brown and a serious expression... Abhay knew now, that his photograph hung in Harish Rangarajan's house. What was he to Harish's family?

Was he the man who had written the ransom note?

SCHARADA BAIL

NEXT MONTH :

A TRAIL EMERGES!

LEARN

ART

BY POST

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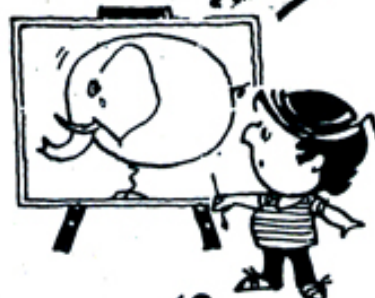
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Mythology

Do you know why Vinayaka, or Ganesha, is worshipped with *Dhruva* grass? Let me tell you the story behind it.

The Kailash mountains loomed all around. Lord Ganesh was enjoying the fresh morning breeze. Suddenly, Nandi came clambering up and said, "Lord! Devendra, the king of gods, Brahma, some sages and the *devas* want to meet you."

"Tell them to come up," said Vinayaka.

"Lord Ganesha!" said Brahma, "The demon Analasura has been troubling us for too long. We can't bear it anymore."

"Fire emanates from his mouth," said Devendra, "He burns all who go near him to ashes."

"Save us! Save us!" the

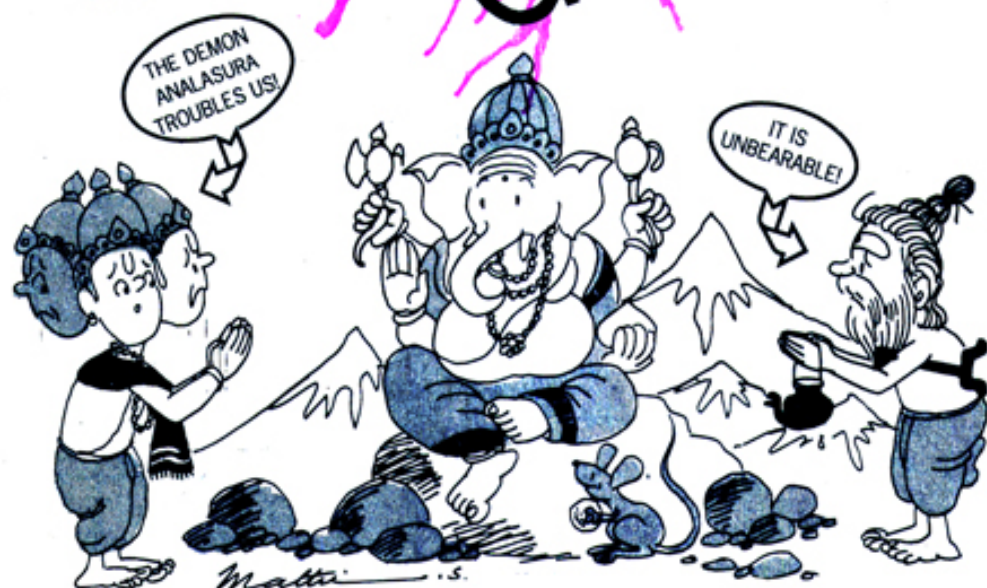
devas cried.

"Don't worry," said Ganesha, "I'll take care of him."

He at once led a huge army against the demon.

Analasura had become a powerful demon indeed. He'd been given a boon to emit fire from his mouth, and burn whom-

KILLED WITH GRASS!



**Vinayaka
swallowed
Analasura.
That was
when his
troubles
began...**



ever he wished.

Thus, he burnt up Ganesha's entire army! Vinayaka was furious. A long and terrible fight took place between the two. When Vinayaka realized that Analasura could not be defeated, he swallowed him up.

But Analasura did not die. He began to emit fire in Vinayaka's stomach.

"Aaah!" said Ganesha, "The demon is burning me up inside! It's unbearable."

The gods did not know what to do.

Somebody had an idea.

"Let's give him some cool water from the Ganges to drink," he said.

But the burning did not stop. Blocks of ice were dragged down from the Kailash mountains and placed on Ganesha's stomach. But in vain.

Soon, the gods gave up. That was when a sage arrived, with a bundle of *Dhruva* grass in his fist. He placed the grass on Vinayaka's head.

Immediately, the burning sensation stopped, and Analasura was digested.

Since then, we worship Vinayaka with *Dhruva* grass.

**Ruchi Mohapatra, aged 11,
Trichy - 620 025
and Nithya S., aged 13,
Madurai - 1.**

Term time was coming to an end. The school was busy practising for parents' day. Brother Undir was in a play. They were doing a dramatic version of *'Treasure Island'*. Since he had a good voice, Teacher had selected him for being the playback voice for Jim Hawkins. Sister Undir had been selected to make all the announcements for the programme. So Sister and Brother sometimes had to stay behind after school for practice. On such days, the school bus made a special trip to drop all the participants home.

On one such day, as Sister Undir did not have any practice, she returned home as usual. But Brother was not back. When Mama Undir asked, she said, "I guess Brother has his drama practice after school today."

"Didn't you check?" asked Papa Undir.

"Heck! He's not a baby any more, Papa! He'll be okay!" replied Sister.

Time went by. Five o' clock. Six o' clock. Six thirty.... It was beginning to get dark. But there was no sign of Brother Undir!

"I'm calling up the school to check what the matter is!" said Papa Undir.

"Brother is not usually this late!" remarked Mama, definitely worried by now.

Watching Papa and Mama, and seeing that they were worried, Sister also began to get a little tense. Why, oh why had she not spoken to him in school before coming home? All those stories about kidnappings! But

WHERE IS BROTHER

perhaps he was on his way right now on the special bus for the participants! She crossed her fingers and wished very hard that it might be true.

"The school bus has finished dropping all the participants

who had practice today! It is back in the school shed!" Papa said to Mama after finishing the telephone call to the school.

"Hmm! And Brother is not yet back!" wondered Mama

to take the help of the police and also to check with all other parents' day participants.

Sister began to pray,

"Dear God, please God, if Brother returns home safely, I

Heck! He's not
a baby any more...!



HER?

aloud, looking quite anxious.

Where could Brother be? Frantic phone calls to Brother's classmates began. Papa also informed the school principal. The Principal agreed

promise I'll never, never fight with him again! Ever! Or almost never! That is, only if he starts first!

Oh, I wish he was here to at least start a fight!"

"Why, oh why couldn't you bring him back with you? What are big sisters for?" scolded Papa Undir.

Poor Sister! She burst into tears!

"It's all my fault!" she thought to herself. Mama held her close

and stroked her back, trying to comfort her.

"Now calm down, sweetheart! Papa is tense and worried. He didn't really mean to scold you. We'll definitely bring Brother back! We're not going to give up!"

Meanwhile Papa had informed the police. A police Inspector, with big whiskers, along with two constables came to the Undir family's banyan tree house. They started their enquiries. Papa began to describe Brother.

"He's not very tall and not very short either. He's not that dark, neither is he a white mouse. He's not very thin and not very plump."

"How are we supposed to find him from such a description, sir?" asked the Inspector, trying to keep a straight face.

"That's your job, isn't it?" asked Papa irritably.

Dear God...
Please God...



"Can you perhaps describe the clothes he was wearing?" the Inspector asked.

"Sure! They were not new, but then they were not very old either," said Papa. "And now, I want my little mouse back to-night!"

"Now sir! Please relax! We will do our very best," the Inspector tried to assure Papa Undir. But Papa was far too tense to relax. Sister Undir was



whimpering continuously. Mama decided to try and retain some balance for Sister's sake. Besides, if everyone got too upset, no one would be able to think rationally. She handed over a photograph of Brother to the police for identification.

"Thank you Ma'am! This is much more useful!" said the Inspector, smartly saluting Mama

Sister, who was an avid reader of Enid Blyton mysteries, began to assume all kinds of situations. Perhaps some robbers had got him. Or he may have disturbed some baddies doing something secret and had to hide. Or else he may have been kidnapped. That wasn't very



oh, brother,
where have
you been?!

likely, she decided. Or by now someone would have called for the ransom money.

Besides, the Undir family was not that rich.

While Sister was thus lost in thought, the doorbell rang. Sister opened the door. And there was Brother! He was back!

"We were all worried sick!" said Sister, "Brother, oh Brother, where have you been?"

"Certainly not to London to look at the Queen!" replied

Undir. The police were on their way to begin the search for Brother Undir.

Meanwhile, where was Brother? What was the matter with him? Was he okay or in some kind of trouble?

STORIES FOR YOUNG READERS

Brother coolly. "But why do you ask? I guess I'm just a little late than usual!"

"Just a little late than usual!" Sister was appalled! "It's 9.30, for your information!" She called out to Mama and Papa, "Look who's back at last!"

Everyone crowded around Brother. This time it was Mama's turn to be overcome. She hugged him tight. Papa wanted explanations.

"Later," said Mama Undir examining Brother from top to toe. "First let me make sure he's alright."

"What have you to say for yourself, young lad?" asked Papa.

"Nothing very much," replied Brother. "Our drama practice got cancelled. So we played for some time at school thinking no one would miss us. And do you know, one of the big mice, Dada from class X, gave me some money and sent me to buy a bottle of Pepsi and two samosas for him! And in return he al-

lowed me to take a sip!" continued, Brother sounding rather proud of himself.



"Since when were you allowed to go outside the school for shopping?" asked Papa.

"Anyway, you couldn't have been playing until 9.30 at night!" exclaimed Mama.

"No, Mama! Then Dada took me to a restaurant for a treat with some of his friends!" replied Brother, a little less certain of himself now.

"Did he have his parents' permission? You sure didn't!" said Papa Undir.

"I don't know! But he's very big! I thought you're allowed when you're big!" Brother tried to explain.

"No one is that big in school! And why didn't

you tell Sister or call home at once?" asked Mama.

"Well, I didn't know it would take that long! Dada said we'd have a quick snack and get back home. His parents had gone out you see, and no one would miss him!" replied Brother sounding a little worried now.

"And we were all so worried! No one has had any dinner! And we've told the Principal! And even the police are on the lookout for you!" Sister said.



"Oh my God!" Brother finally realized the seriousness of what he'd done. Looking at the grim faces of Papa and Mama he sobered up.

Suddenly Sister giggled.

"You should have heard Papa's description of you! Not

even Sherlock Holmes could have done very much with it!"

Mama mimicked Papa Undir, "He's not very tall and not very short. He's not very dark and neither is he white. He's not very thin and not very plump."

Everyone laughed. They felt much better now. Papa informed the Police and the school Principal. The Principal decided to have a serious talk with Dada's parents. He also said he would summon Brother and talk to him too. They didn't want

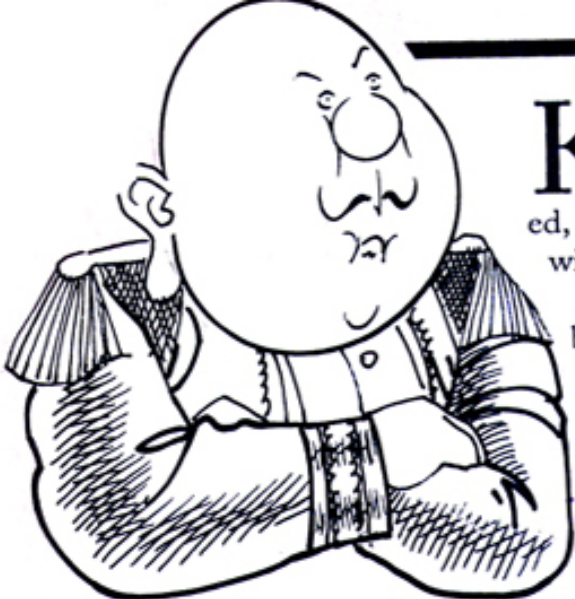
other little ones to be misguided, the Principal said. Brother agreed he had made a mistake.

"I'll never ever do this again! I'm really sorry for all the trouble and commotion I caused!" he said.

"That's not all! Think of what the Prince is going to say to you tomorrow!" Sister reminded him.

"Oh no! My adventure wasn't worth it after all!" groaned Brother.

ANURADHA KHATI



King Jayabalan was in a towering rage. His plump cheeks quivered, and his fat paunch shook with anger.

"How dare he write a book!" he thundered. "And that too, a book attacking me!"

Sensing the king's mood, all the ministers tried to put on suitably indignant expressions on their faces.

"He should be punished severely," said Sigainasam, the Minister for Interior.

"We should banish him," said Ayalan, the foreign minister.

"What? That means he can go to another country and write another book!" the king bellowed.

VAK

JAYABALAN AND THE BOOK



"Yes, that was a stupid suggestion," said Ayalan immediately. "I withdraw it with shame and remorse."

"Let us pass a law banning all books," said Arivili, the minister for Education.

They were talking about a book written by Udhayan, who was known to be a good and wise man. He was also a great social reformer, who wished to improve the lot of the common people.

The minister Solmannan, who was considered a great orator, rose to speak.

"My heart bleeds, my body aches, my brain reels and my pulse stops, when I hear about this venomous book spawned in the filthy mind of a dastardly writer. Every drop of blood running in the veins of every

son of the sacred soil of our motherland, should be on fire when our beloved king is thus insulted. Should we tarry, should we wait, to avenge this outrage, this unprecedented mockery, this..."

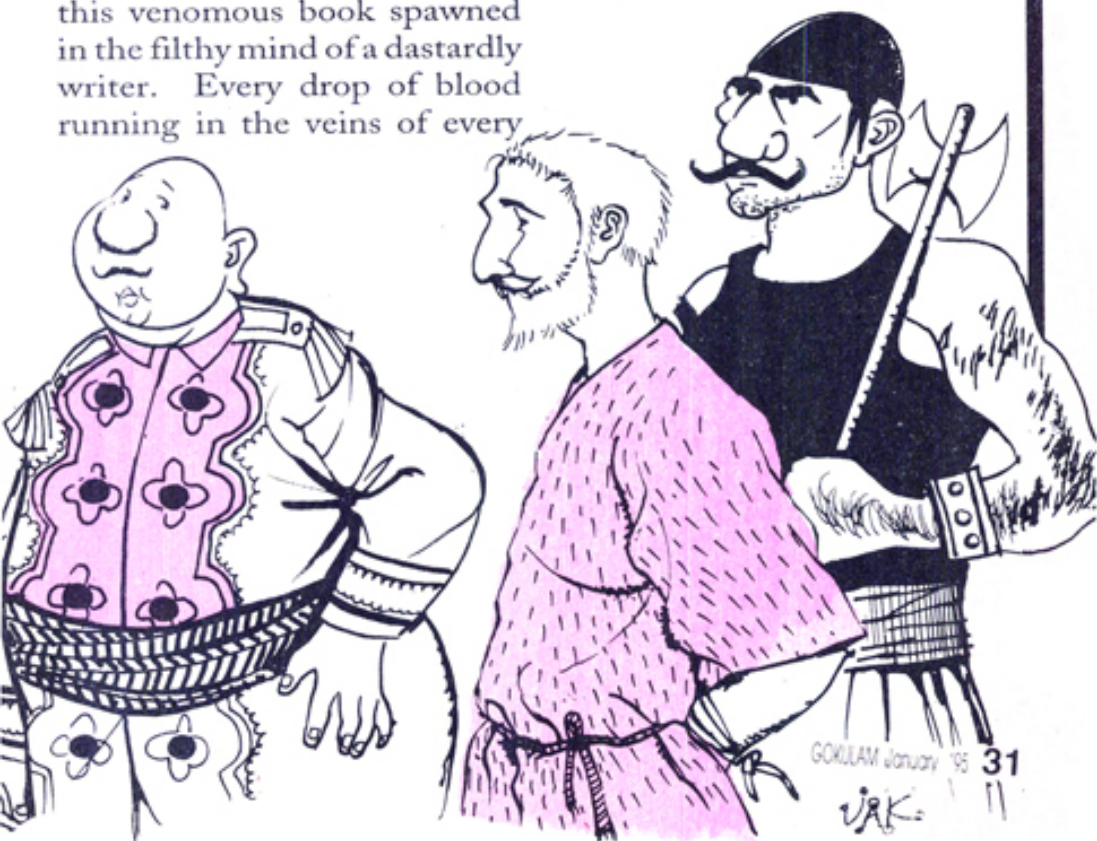
"Come to the point, you old fool!" the king snapped.

"Yes, your Majesty," said Solmannan humbly. "I just wished to suggest a death sentence for Udhayan."

"Let's hang him," said Arivili.

"No. Let's behead him," said Sigainasam.

"That's right," said the king. "Beheading is better. I want to see his head rolling on the



ground. Does everyone agree on beheading?"

No one dared to disagree. Even Ganabadi who had been dozing throughout, suddenly woke up and yelled, "Off with his head!"

So Udhayan was arrested, and brought before the king and his ministers. He was not given any chance to defend himself. And the death sentence was passed quickly.

A day was fixed for the beheading, and the ministers went about making speeches in every street corner, railing against Udhayan and his book. The enraged public started agitating against all books, and a couple of writers were beaten up, even though they had written only some medical books.

Teacher : Can you tell me some abstract nouns? Here's an example — boyhood. Raghu....

Raghu : Manhood!

Kalpana : Womanhood!

Pradeep : Little Red Riding Hood!

Jones Augustine,
aged 10,
Bangalore - 84.



Soon, came the day of execution. A very large crowd had gathered to see the rash author die.

Udhayan was brought to the place with his arms bound behind his back. The bearded author was cool and fearless.

As was the custom of the land, the accused had to be asked for his last wish before the beheading. So Sigainasam stepped up to him and asked, "What is your last wish before you die?"

"I wish to know which particular passage in my book offended the king," said Udhayan.

The king was stumped for an answer, because he had not even seen the book.

"I authorise my minister Sigainasam to answer this question," said the king grandly.

The bemused Sigainasam passed on the question to Ganabadi, and Ganabadi passed it on to Solmannan, and Solmannan to Arivili, and he to someone else, and so on, for no one had seen the book as it had not been published yet.

And so they had to let Udhayan go, which was a very good thing indeed.

JANAKAN



Backwards!

This happened when my cousin Reema was nine years old. She once visited my house. I was busy reading a magazine. She sat next to me and began reading it too.

I finished reading the story, and was about to turn the page, when I remembered that Reema was reading it too.

"Have you finished?" I asked her. "Not yet," she smiled at me, "I have to read the beginning of this story."

I laughed when I realized that she had read the ending of the story first. She had to go to the page in front to read the beginning!

Fareen, aged 12,
A.B.H. School, Bangalore.

Dear readers,

Many of you, like Fareen, forget to give your complete address with your contributions. It becomes very difficult to select the articles you send for publication then.

We need your complete home address, to communicate with you after your article gets selected for publication.

So remember — when you write an article, add your NAME, AGE, ADDRESS, as well as your SCHOOL NAME to it.

And Fareen, please send us your complete address.

Ed.

KING VIKRAMADITYA WAS FAMOUS FOR HIS JUSTICE. HERE IS ONE INSTANCE OF IT.

A DACOIT ONCE TERRORISED UJJAIN. PEOPLE WERE AFRAID TO GO OUT, ONCE IT WAS DUSK. FOR, AT NIGHT, THE DACOIT WOULD STOP ALL WAYFARERS AND ROB THEM OF THEIR VALUABLES. THE KING'S SOLDIERS TRIED THEIR BEST TO CATCH HIM.

FINALLY, THE DACOIT WAS CAUGHT AND DRAGGED BEFORE KING VIKRAMADITYA.

"YOU SHALL BE HANGED!" WAS VIKRAMADITYA'S VERDICT.

"A GOOD VERDICT," THE DACOIT REMARKED,

"BUT O KING! BEFORE I DIE, I WANT TO IMPART A SECRET SKILL TO A WORTHY MAN."

"WHAT SKILL IS IT?" ASKED VIKRAMADITYA.

"I CAN'T TELL YOU THAT," SAID THE BANDIT, "BUT YOU CAN HARVEST GOLD WITH IT!"

THE WHOLE COURT WAS AMAZED.

"YOU COULD HAVE USED YOUR SKILL THEN," SAID THE KING, "INSTEAD OF ROBBING AND KILLING PEOPLE."

"ALAS, O KING," SAID THE BANDIT, "THE ONE WHO CAN MAKE IT WORK SHOULD BE VERY HONEST, AND I AM NOT."

"ONE OF MY COURTIERS SHALL LEARN IT," SAID THE



Court of Liars



STOLE A HORSE
ONCE."



IN THIS WAY,
POOR Vikramaditya
SOON REALIZED THAT HIS, WAS A COURT
OF LIARS AND THIEVES!

He looked at the bandit.

"I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TRYING
TELL ME," HE SAID, "I'LL SET YOU FREE
AND GIVE YOU A JOB. BUT ON ONE
CONDITION — YOU MUST NEVER LIE OR

king. THE COURTIERs LOOKED AT EACH
OTHER. WAS THERE ONE AMONG
THEM SO HONEST THAT HE'D NEVER
TOLD A LIE?

"MAHARAJA," SAID ONE
COURTIER, "WHY DON'T YOU
LEARN IT?"

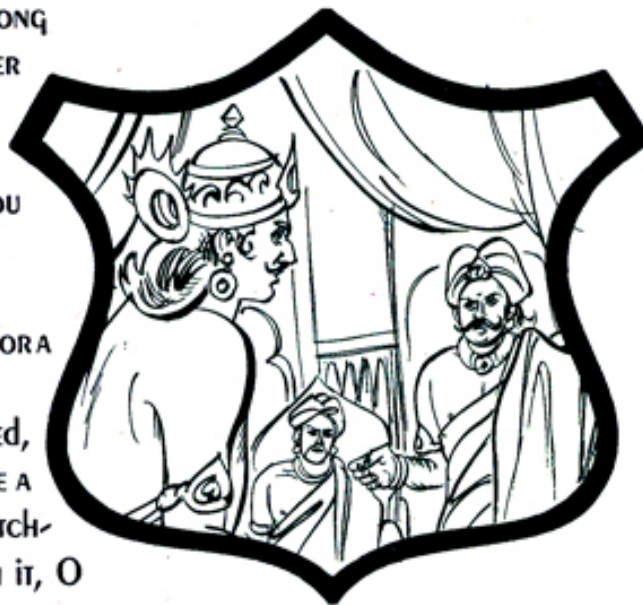
VIKRAMADITYA THOUGHT FOR A
MOMENT.

"I CANNOT," HE REPLIED,
"WHEN I WAS A CHILD, I STOLE A
SWEETMEAT FROM THE PALACE KITCH-
ENS. WHY DON'T YOU LEARN IT, O
MANTRI?"

THE MINISTER STOOD UP.

"I CANNOT, O RAJA," HE REPLIED,
LOOKING ASHAMED, "I'VE NOT BEEN
HONEST TOO. I HAVE BEEN STEALING
VALUABLES FROM YOUR TREASURY FROM
TIME TO TIME."

"I CANNOT, O KING," SAID THE
NEXT COURTIER WHO WAS ASKED, "I



STEAL AGAIN."

THE BANDIT WAS OVERJOYED.
"I'LL BE YOUR LOYAL SERVANT, MAHA-
RAJA," HE SAID.

**J. Sabun, Std. VI,
Vana Vani School,
Madras.**

CREATIVE CORNER



P. Senthil Kumar
Vidya Vikasini Matric H.S.S.,
Coimbatore.



Swetha C., aged 12,
Bangalore - 560 003.



S. Samyuktha, aged 13,
Holy Angels
H.S.S.,
Salem - 9.

Janany Krishnan, aged 8,
Carmel Primary School.

Dear Janany,
You have not given any address.
Please send it to us. Ed.

M.G. Krishna Achari, aged 14,
Vidya Mandir H.S., Goa - 403 801.



Naina R. Dewan,
aged 12,
Bombay - 97.



S. Vaishnavi, aged 6,
V.L.B.J.
Matric H.S.S.,
Kuniamuthur.

S. Nandini,
aged 10,
Presidency
School,
Bangalore.



“Where’s my umbrella? I had just left it in the verandah!”

“Where’s my pink blouse? I had just hung it out on the clothesline...”

“Oh! My new pair of slippers... They’re gone!”

The residents of *Brindavana Colony* were fed up of losing their things every other day.

“This is just the beginning... The street-urchins are the

break open our houses and rob us of all our belongings...”

“Let’s employ a watchman!”

“...who’ll sleep all through the night when the thieves prowl around?” snorted Mr. Subash.

“Let’s keep a dog... a fine watch-dog is equal to a battalion of soldiers.”

Well... It was agreed!

Three days later...
A chubby, brown and black



RAMBO

culprits. They’re keeping an eye on our houses, and the minute we turn our backs, they vanish with our things...!” shouted Mr. Venkat.

“Wait till I catch them... they’ll learn a lesson,” fumed Mrs. Vijaya.

“One day they are going to

pup with silky ears and golden eyes arrived.

“My friend gave him to me free of cost. His brothers and sisters were sold for thousand rupees each,” Praveen boasted proudly.

“What breed is he?” somebody asked. Nobody knew. He looked

like a jolly mixture of an Alsation, a Labrador, a Boxer, a blood-hound and our street dog Mani!

"Let's not worry about his pedigree. As long as he is healthy and grows up to be a fine watchdog, he's okay."

"What shall we call him?" Mona wondered.

"Tiger? Rover? Caesar? Raja? Rana?"

"Oh.... Such stale names!"

"RAMBO?"

"It sounds great!"

The residents of the colony took a strange liking for Rambo. They competed with each other to feed him.

They pampered him with saucers of milk, soft white slices of bread, soft-boiled eggs, tender chunks of meat, soft tasty curd rice and so on.

Soon Rambo grew fatter than a pumpkin!

The kids found a great 'helper' in Rambo.

All their not-so-favourite dishes and the left-overs from their lunch packs found a place in Rambo's tummy!

Rambo began to resemble a walking balloon, with cocky ears and a curled-up tail!



So heavy was he, that he could hardly run to fetch a stick or chase a ball!

The only times Rambo bothered to bark loudly was, when the chirpy sparrows disturbed his siesta, or when a kid refused to part with a biscuit!

The neighbourhood urchins had no trouble in whisking away their quota of mangoes and gooseberries from the kitchen garden; or plastic mugs and rubber sandals from the yard. Rambo had become a great pal of theirs as they were always offering him delicious pieces of *dosas*, *masala vadais* or soft *idlies*!

Maybe someone had taught him that it was not good-manners to say 'no' to a snack! Even if Rambo was not hungry, he dutifully picked up the titbits offered to him, and stacked it neatly in a corner of the yard,

for future use!

"Good for nothing fellow..."

"Catch him barking at a thief!"

"Maybe in his dreams..."

"Even then, he'll be too lazy to chase him!"

These rude remarks had little effect on Rambo.

He continued snoring loudly as he dreamed about *parathas* topped with scrambled eggs.

yard. Our hero, Rambo, was standing on his chest and growling at him menacingly.

"Your dog has done a good job! Keep it up chubby fellow! We've caught this crook — thanks to you!"

The Inspector patted Rambo's belly.

"Isn't he simply great?" winked Mrs. Vijaya, as she eyed the corner of the yard.

Well! She guessed it right.

The thief who scaled the wall, had landed on Rambo's neat pile of assorted eats, which he had hoarded so meticulously for his midnight snacks.

This had upset Rambo. He thought the fellow had come to steal his little mountain of stale *samosas*, *vadais*, sandwiches and bones. The

thought made Rambo wild!

"Grrrrr..."

He pounced on him with all his might, sunk his teeth into the flesh of his thighs, and growled loudly!

The rest is *History!*

That night....

A loud scream. A dull thud, followed by Rambo's blood curdling growls and barks, woke up the colony.

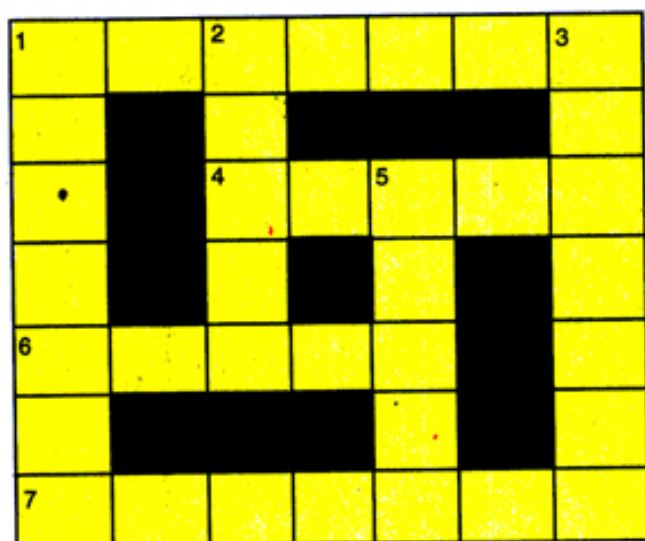
All lights were on now.

Mr. Srinivas was the first to spot the guy with a sack, sprawled in the corner of the



USHA SRIKUMAR

SWEET 'n' SHORT!



Solution on Page 80

CLUES ACROSS :

1. Main division of a book
4. Flowers open out
6. Notes to help the memory
7. Exchange of information

CLUES DOWN :

1. Light brown colour
2. Keep your photos in this
3. Ninth month of Mohammedan year
5. A spot in a desert

A. GAURI SHANKAR.



Madhuranthakam, in Tamilnadu, has a big lake that supplies water to many areas.

Years ago, under British rule, this place was in the

control of Lord Bell.

It was the monsoon season. It was raining heavily. The water level in the lake had risen dangerously, and the banks were about to

RAMA, OF THE LAKE

break. Lord Bell was a troubled man. How was he to save the town? He hardly knew what to do. Confused, he prayed to Lord Rama fervently.

He could not sleep that night. He sat by the window overlooking the lake,

waiting for the bunds to break. But what did he see?



Two god-like youths, clad in silk clothes and wearing armour, were guarding the lake with bows in hand.

Lord Bell rubbed his eyes to see if he was dreaming. He was not. The collector then realized that the youths were none other than Rama and Lakshmana, whom he had

prayed to, earlier in the evening.

By morning, the rain had stopped. The sun came out, and relieved people saw that their lake had stood the test.

Lord Bell began constructing a temple to Lord

Rama near the lake.

The temple stands even today. The god of that temple is praised as the *Erikatha Ramar*, the Rama who protected the lake.

M. Archana,
aged 12,
Madras - 75.

Judge : Do you have any last wish before you are hanged?

Prisoner : Yes, your honour.

Judge : Tell me...

Prisoner : I want to eat some mangoes.

Judge : But it is not the mango season!

Prisoner : Never mind. I'll wait!

N.Saroja, aged 13,
B.E.M.L. High School, K.G.F.



Q : Why did the ant hide herself behind a tree, when she saw an elephant coming that way?

A : She wanted to 'Boo' the elephant!



Q : Why did the ant hide herself behind a tree when she saw another elephant coming that way?

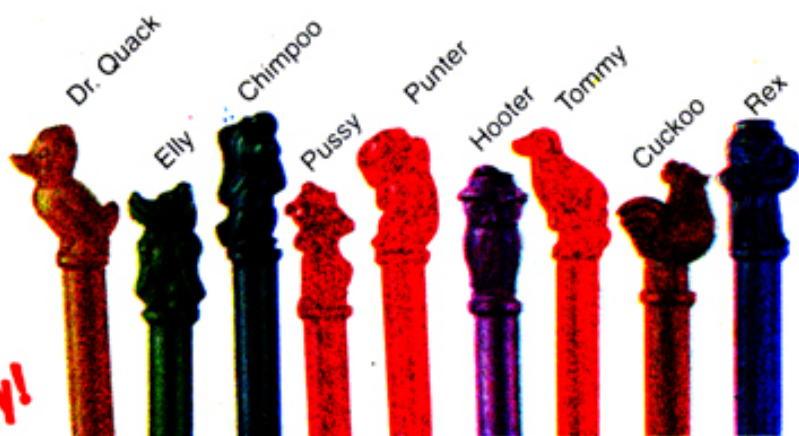
A : She wanted to put out her leg and trip him!

Hemant,
Bombay - 88

BAND-AID®

Funtest

Two Funsticks* free
with every Band-Aid
Funtest pack



Hurry!

Start collecting your Funsticks* NOW!

* Perfumed plastic crayons

Rules and Regulations

1. The contest is open to children between 4 and 15 years of age. Only Indian citizens are eligible.
2. Employees of Johnson & Johnson and Ogilvy & Mather and their relatives are politely declined to enter.
3. An individual can send in any number of entries.
4. Each entry must be complete. Incomplete or illegible entries will be considered invalid.
5. The last date for receiving entries is 28th February, 1995. However, the company reserves the right to extend or restrict the closing date.

Enter the BAND-AID® Funtest

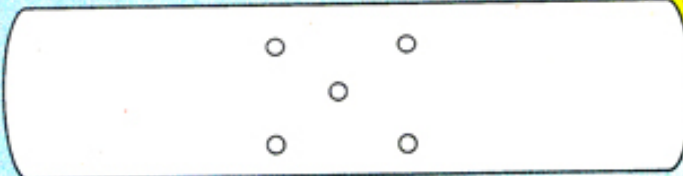
All you have to do is to paint a strip and answer a few simple questions. And a whole lot of exciting prizes are yours to be won.

Also **1000** Early Bird Prizes
(So send in your entry today!)

Johnson & Johnson



Make it a
Funstrip



Use your imagination to make this Band-Aid a Funstrip. You may colour, draw or write on it to make it a real Funstrip.

Tick the right answer

- What is the size of a Band-Aid Strip?
☐ 19mm x 72mm ☐ 17mm x 70mm ☐ 21mm x 74 mm
- Only Band-Aid Strips from Johnson & Johnson are fully sterilised.
☐ True ☐ False
- How many Band-Aid Strips (all types) are there in the Band-Aid Funtest Pack?
☐ 20 ☐ 15 ☐ 30
- What is the effective medication on the pad of a Band-Aid called?
☐ Boric Powder ☐ Benzalkonium Chloride ☐ Tincture Iodine
- In India, how many Walt Disney characters have appeared on Band-Aid Strips?
☐ 4 ☐ 6 ☐ 2

Name : _____

Date of Birth: _____ Sex : _____

Address : _____

School : _____

- No entry will be returned.
- Winners will be informed by post.
- The decision of the judges will be final & binding.
- Johnson & Johnson reserves the right to alter, suspend or withdraw the scheme with/without stating any reasons.
- All entry forms must be mailed by ordinary post to : The Band-Aid Funtest, C/o. DataBasics, P.O. Box 16605, Bombay 400 019.



But soon, my uncle realized that my mother was missing. Panic seized him, and his mouth went dry. He could hear his mother calling out to his sister. What was he to do?

Suddenly, he

QUICK RESCUE!

My mother was just two years old. One afternoon, her mother plaited her hair, and wove a string of beautiful orange *kanakambaram* flowers into it.

"Come play with me," my uncle (then a boy) called out to my mother.

Soon, the two children were busy playing hide and seek.

Now, it was uncle's turn to seek out my mother. He searched and searched, but in vain. Where had she hidden herself so successfully?

noticed a string of *kanakambaram* flowers floating in a pit of turbid water. He ran and looked closer. They looked like....

Quickly, he pulled at the flowers. Out of the water, my mother's little head emerged. Her brother pulled and pulled, till she was safe at last.

**B. Archana, aged 13,
Madras - 42.**

Dear Archana,

You have not given your full address. Please send it to us. Ed.

SEW A PICTURE

STITCH IN TIME!

You need :

- Modelling cardboard
- Needle
- Embroidery threads in different colours
- Scissors
- Gum

How to make it :

Carefully remove the following two pages from the pins holding them. Paste them on the sheet of modelling cardboard cut to size.

Thread the needle with all six strands of the colour of the thread. Now pull the needle through the dot 1, and pass it out through 2. Pull the needle through dot 4, and pass it out through 3.

Pull the needle gently, so that the cardboard doesn't tear. Choose appropriate colour threads for different areas. For example — use black thread for hair.

SANDY

Illustration : **JAYARAJ**

Ramesh : When I finished playing the guitar the whole class shouted "Fine, fine!"

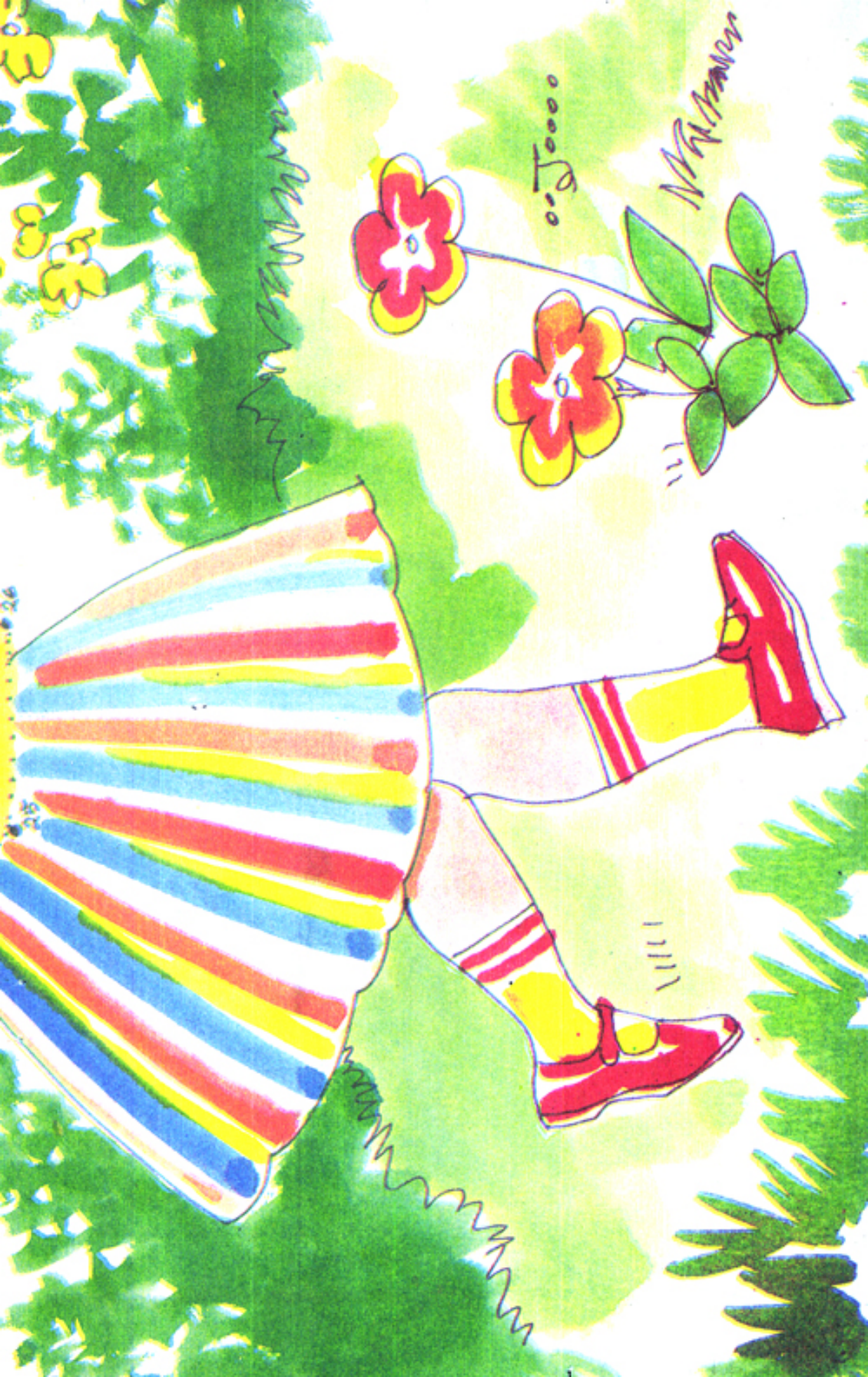
Raju : How much fine did you pay?

**Jones Augustine, aged 10,
Bangalore - 84.**



GOKULAM!
SEW A PICTURE!





RECIPE

POTATO PURI



You need :

- 2 medium sized potatoes
- 125 gms *maida*
- 50 gms wheat flour
- 1 small onion,
chopped fine
- 2 green chillies,
chopped fine
- Corriander leaves,
finely chopped
- 1 tsp. ghee
- Salt and chilli powder
to taste

How to make it :

Mix all the above ingredients together to form a soft dough. Roll into small balls and flatten out into round puris with a rolling pin.

Deep fry in hot oil and serve hot with mango pickle.

**M. S. Neelima, aged 14,
The Secunderabad School,
Hyderabad.**

I was a school boy then. But I remember this incident as vividly as if it had happened yesterday.

I studied in the village Primary School, where my father was a teacher. Our neighbour, Madhavan Ezhuthachan, was a teacher too, but in a different school. His daughter, Lakshmi, fondly called Lachu, was my friend and playmate. We went to school together, and returned home together. At home, I would throw my bag in a corner, eat my tiffin, and rush to Lachu's house.

Behind her house was a barn. Lachu would be waiting there every evening for me.

We were not allowed to play in the yard before the barn.

"Lachu!" her mother would say, "Don't spoil your dress playing in the mud."

So we always played in the little verandah before the barn. We played many different games with tamarind seeds. Lachu had a vast collection of them.

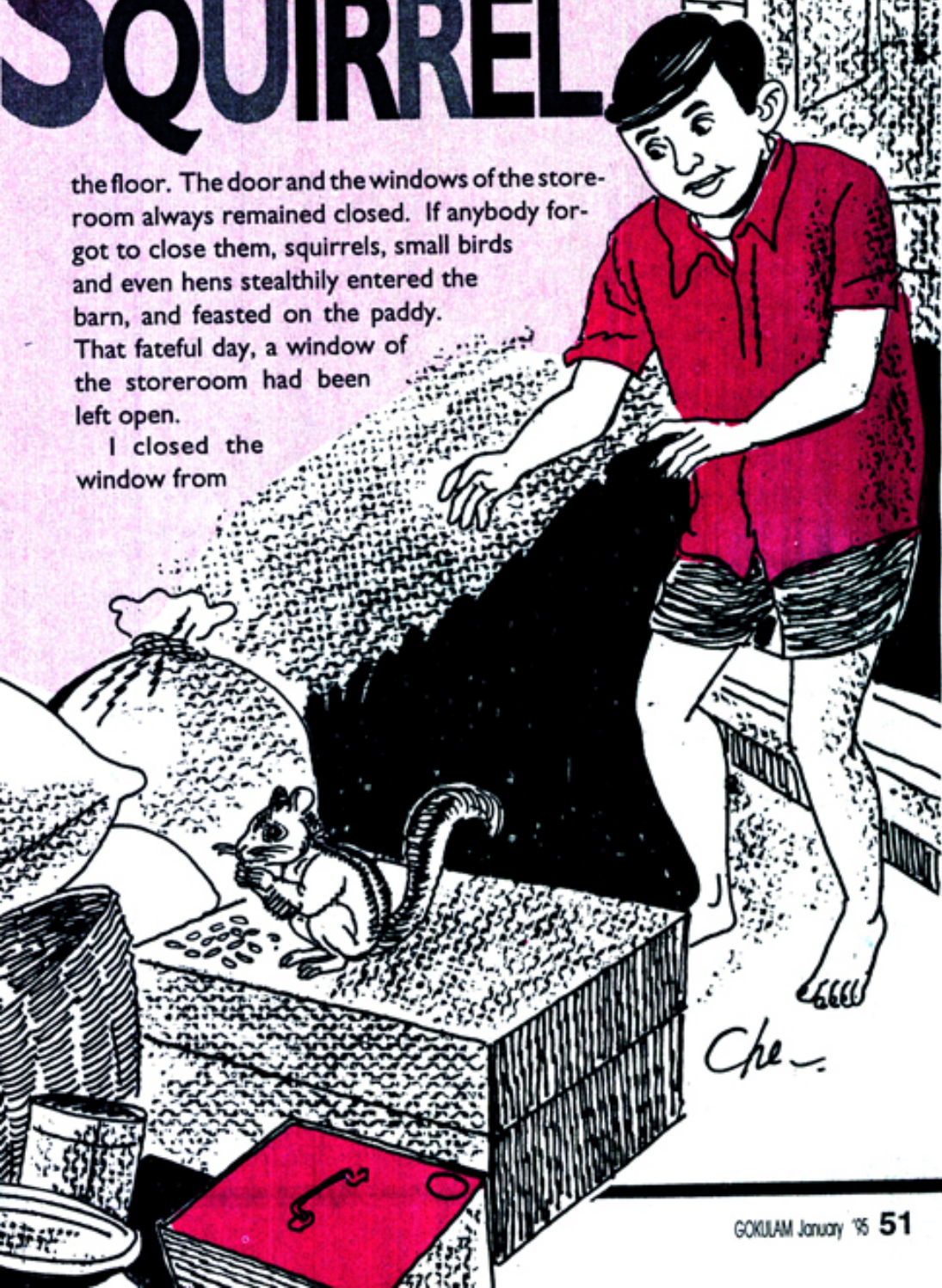
One Sunday morning, I reached the barn house, as usual. But Lachu was nowhere to be seen. Maybe she was searching for the colour pencil she had promised me last evening. I sat waiting for her. Suddenly, I saw a squirrel sneaking into the barn store-room through a small window.

As it was harvest time the barn store-room was filled to the brim. Some paddy was lying scattered on

THE SQUIRREL

the floor. The door and the windows of the store-room always remained closed. If anybody forgot to close them, squirrels, small birds and even hens stealthily entered the barn, and feasted on the paddy. That fateful day, a window of the storeroom had been left open.

I closed the window from



Chen

outside. Then I unbolted the latch of the door without making any noise, tiptoed into the room and closed the door behind me.

In the dim light, I saw the squirrel sitting on its hind legs, eating paddy. When I switched on the light, it panicked and ran towards the window. Since the window was closed, it jumped onto the highest container in the room, and perching on it, began to squeak in a shrill voice.

I was determined to catch the squirrel. There was a wild chase when it ran helter-skelter around the room in fright. I caught it at last!

While the poor creature was trying to escape from my grip, I managed to find a string. I made a knot, and soon, I was holding the string, with the squirrel at the other end.

"Ha! ha! How's it?" I asked the squirrel, and pulled the string towards me.

Hearing familiar footsteps behind me, I turned. Lachu stood there, her right palm tightly closed. The colour pencil, I guessed.

The squirrel squeaked again,

struggling in agony.

"Why did you catch it?" Lachu demanded, staring first at me, and then at the squirrel.



"Oh! This squirrel! I want it for a pet," I replied. I proudly took the squirrel in the palm of my left hand.

"Viswa! Let go of that poor creature!" she said.

"No! I've caught it and I don't want to part with it," I looked at Lachu in the eye as I said this.

"At least loosen the knot around its neck," she pleaded.

"I can't. It'll run away."

I knew she would be cross with me for not listening to her.

But I wanted the squirrel.

Lachu's face became flushed with anger. Without uttering another word, she walked past me. She seemed to have forgotten about our friendship, the many games we played, all....

The moment she disappeared from sight, I began to repent my action. I should've agreed to Lachu's suggestion and let go of the squirrel. I couldn't even think of spending a day without talking to Lachu or playing with her.

"Lachu! Oh, Lachu! Take the squirrel. Do what you want with it!"

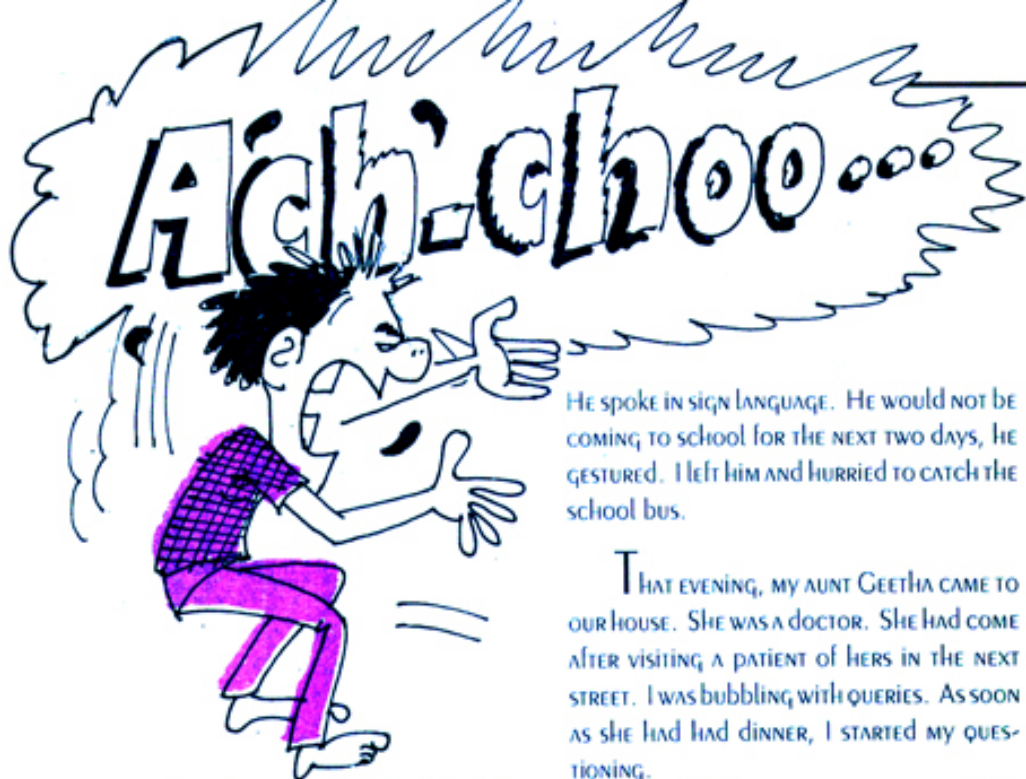
She came out of her house immediately, as if she had been waiting for my call.

She gently took the squirrel in her hands. The first thing she did was to remove the string from around its neck. Then she set it free. It ran up the mango tree in the yard, and perching on a branch, squeaked noisily.

Lachu looked at me and smiled. I smiled back at her.

V.T. VISWANATHAN





He spoke in sign language. He would not be coming to school for the next two days, he gestured. I left him and hurried to catch the school bus.

THAT EVENING, MY AUNT GEETHA CAME TO OUR HOUSE. SHE WAS A DOCTOR. SHE HAD COME AFTER VISITING A PATIENT OF HERS IN THE NEXT STREET. I WAS BUBBLING WITH QUERIES. AS SOON AS SHE HAD HAD DINNER, I STARTED MY QUESTIONING.

I WAS ALREADY RUNNING LATE FOR SCHOOL. BUT VICKY HADN'T COME AS YET. WITHIN A FEW MINUTES, OUR SCHOOL BUS WOULD COME TO THE STREET CORNER. I WENT UP TO THE THIRD FLOOR, TO VICKY'S HOUSE AND RANG THE BELL. I WAS SURPRISED TO SEE THE FIGURE WHICH OPENED THE DOOR — IT HAD A PLUM RED NOSE WITH WATERY EYES, AND A BIG SCARF TIED AROUND ITS HEAD. IT TOOK ME A FEW SECONDS TO RECOGNIZE VICKY.

"AUNTIE! WHAT CAUSES COMMON COLD? IS IT DUE TO BACTERIA? DON'T WE HAVE ANY MEDICINE THAT CAN CURE IT IMMEDIATELY?"

"NO BALA," AUNT REPLIED, "IT IS CAUSED BY VIRUS — ABOUT HUNDRED DIFFERENT VARIETIES ARE THERE. THESE HAVE NOT BEEN SEGREGATED. SO WE ARE UNABLE TO GIVE YOU ANY MEDICINE THAT WOULD CURE COLD IMMEDIATELY. WE CAN TAKE SOME ANTIBIOTICS THAT COULD LESSEN THE INTENSITY AND PREVENT THE RECURRENCE OF COLD. BUT WE CAN FOLLOW SEVERAL SIMPLE 'CODES' THAT WILL HELP US GET OVER THE IMPACT QUICKLY."



"THEN WHAT ABOUT THE MEDICINES SOLD IN THE PHARMACY?" I ASKED.

"I TOLD YOU THERE IS NO SPECIFIC MEDICINE TO WARD OFF COLD! YOU SHOULD TAKE THE ANTIBIOTICS THAT SUIT YOU."

"WHAT PRECAUTIONS SHOULD WE TAKE?" I ASKED.

"FIRST, YOU SHOULD STAY AT HOME AND RELAX. THAT WILL GIVE YOU THE NECESSARY REST, AND ALSO PREVENT OTHERS FROM GETTING IT FROM YOU."

NOSE OR MOUTH WHEN SUFFERING FROM COLD. DISINFECT EVERYDAY SURFACES WHERE YOU WORK. DRINK PLENTY OF FLUIDS. THIS WILL THIN OUT THE MUCUS IN YOUR CHEST. AIR CIRCULATION IN THE PLACE SHOULD BE INCREASED."

"CAN WE WATCH T.V.?"

"WHY NOT?" AUNTY SMILED, "YOU CAN, BUT SIT AT A SAFE DISTANCE FROM OTHERS. THERE IS AN INTERESTING THING ABOUT THE RELATION BETWEEN COLD AND ENTERTAINMENT. DR. KATHLEEN DILON OF WESTERN, NEW ENGLAND, HAS PROVED THAT THOSE PA-



"I ALWAYS GET COLD BEFORE AN EXAMINATION, AUNTIE! I DON'T KNOW WHY," I MUMBLED THIS QUESTION OUT.

"AH! TENSION OR STRESS IS AN IMPORTANT CAUSE OF COLD. DURING THE EXAMS, YOU READ A LOT AND WORRY A LOT TOO. NATURALLY, YOUR SYSTEM GETS WEAK AND YOU GET A COLD."

"TELL ME MORE ABOUT OTHER PRECAUTIONS," I BEGGED.

"GENERALLY, COLD IS TRANSMITTED THROUGH THE AIR BY COUGHING AND SNEEZING, OR BY CONTACT WITH A PERSON OR THING COATED WITH GERMS. THE BEST THING TO DO IS TO WASH YOUR HANDS AND NOT TO TOUCH YOUR EYES,

TIENTS WITH COLD WHO WATCHED A COMEDY SHOW, HAD A BETTER LEVEL OF IMMUNITY! THEIR *Immuno Globin* LEVEL CHANGED CONSIDERABLY."

"WHAT ABOUT HOME REMEDIES?" I WONDERED, "DO THEY REALLY HELP?"

"SURE! YOU CAN BOIL SOME *tulsi* LEAVES (basil) WITH YOUR TEA AND DRINK IT HOT. YOU CAN ALSO PUT CRUSHED GINGER IN IT. HALF A SPOON OF HONEY WITH LEMON IS A GOOD HOME REMEDY SUGGESTED BY GRANNY!"

"THANK YOU AUNTY! I SHALL TELL VICKY."

"GO AHEAD," SMILED AUNT GEETHA.

KRISHNAVENI RANGANATHAN

Hi, friends! You must have read the story *Colour Blind*, in the September '94 issue. But, do you know how the different birds got their wonderful colours?

Long long ago, there were two best friends. They were the koel* and the peacock. The whole forest knew of them as fast friends who stood by each other in times good and bad. In those ancient times, all birds looked a sort of washed out muddy colour. They

terrible! I must tell the lord about this...."

Shaking his head in a very disappointed manner, Narada went back to heaven.

At Indraloka, the king was seated on his lustrous throne watching dancers clad in brilliant and beautifully coloured garments.

"Oh! Oh!" Narada exclaimed, "This is how the birds should be."

"How dare you disturb me,"

PRIDE!

were of different shapes and sizes, but colours, no!

Narada was visiting the Earth. "How beautiful and green the forests are," he thought.

But as he looked closer, he was disappointed. Among the lush green leaves, birds of a muddy brown colour hopped about, hunted for food, fed their young....

"How awful!" Narada exclaimed, "These muddy-brown creatures are birds? How

Indra cried, "What's the meaning of this?"

"Forgive me, Indra," Narada replied, "But I am just back from Earth. Have you seen the birds there?"

"Hmmm.....yes. I guess I have," Indra replied, "What about them?"

"The poor creatures are so dull and unhappy, with not a colour to brighten up their lives!"

"But Narada!" exclaimed Indra, "That's how they were

created...."

"So what?" Narada asked, "Can't you brighten them up a bit?"

Indra liked the idea. Armed with pots of different colours, and brushes of various sizes, Indra landed on Earth.

The first bird that he met, was the peacock.

"Oh, you poor peacock," Indra said, "What an awful colour you are. Shall I paint you up?"

The peacock looked doubtful. Indra set down his pots of colours and said, "Here, I tell you what. You may choose the colours you want."

The peacock saw the colours and was really excited.

It allowed Indra to paint its



body a lovely greenish-blue. Then, sticking out its tail, it spread the feathers out.

"Start with the blue," it told Indra.

Indra began with the blue, used green, black, a little yellow, did some mixing.... Soon, a small group of birds had gathered to watch. Narada came there too.

In the end, the peacock was thrilled to discover that it had a really gorgeous tail.

"Go, peacock," said Indra, "Tell your other friends to come to me and get themselves painted."

The peacock went dancing and hopping through the morning light. With each step, it looked back at itself. And each look convinced it, that it was the most beautiful creature in the whole world.

"Oh my friends," it sang out, "Come, look at me."

All the birds came out, and a collective gasp went around, "Aah!"

"How beautiful!"

"You can get yourselves painted too," the peacock sang, "Indra is waiting there to do it for you."

There was a mad scramble, as the birds turned and rushed towards Indra, wanting to be the

first to be coloured.

But where was the koel all this time? She was seated near the river-bank, on a low shrub, waiting for her best friend the peacock.

The peacock had not forgotten the koel.

"Let her wait," he thought, "I'll tell her last."

And in his heart of hearts, he didn't want to tell her at all. If she were dull, and he so gorgeous, he would always be the superior one, wouldn't he?

Well, the peacock never told the poor koel.

The parrot, who had been coloured a bright green, was very pleased with herself. She was trying out the effect of her new image by the river, when she saw the koel.

"Hey, koel! What are you doing here? Aren't you getting yourself painted?"

"Painted? What is that?"

"Didn't your best friend tell you?" the parrot asked, "He was the first to get painted."

The koel rushed to where Indra was,

But alas! Indra had just used the last drops of blue and green on the kingfisher. All other colours were exhausted too. Only black was left.

"Why didn't you come just a little earlier?" Indra asked.

"My best friend forgot to tell me," muttered the koel.

"Well, there's only black," said Indra, "Shall I stripe you or spot you?"

"Just pour the black colour over my head," the koel said, bitterly.

As Indra painted the koel black, a little tear-drop rolled out of its eye.

He felt sorry for it.

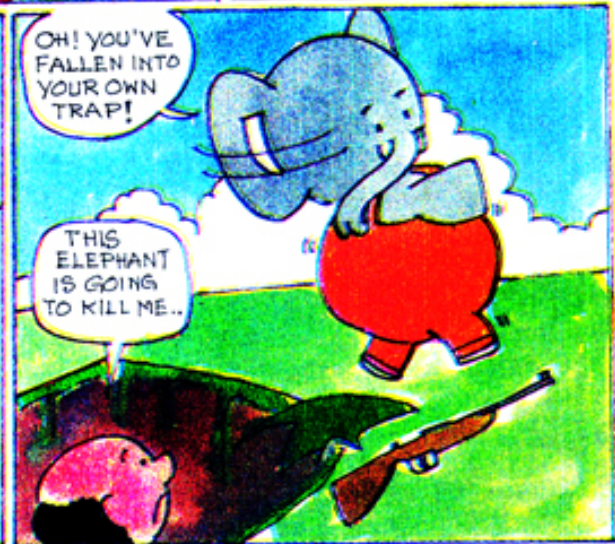
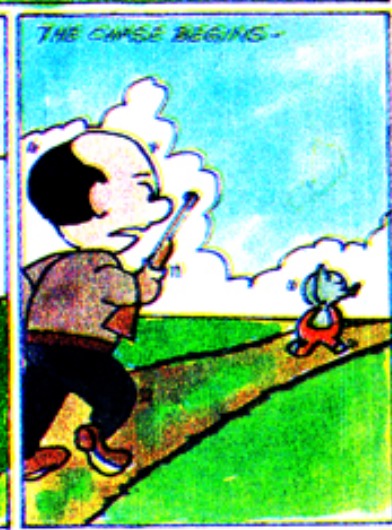
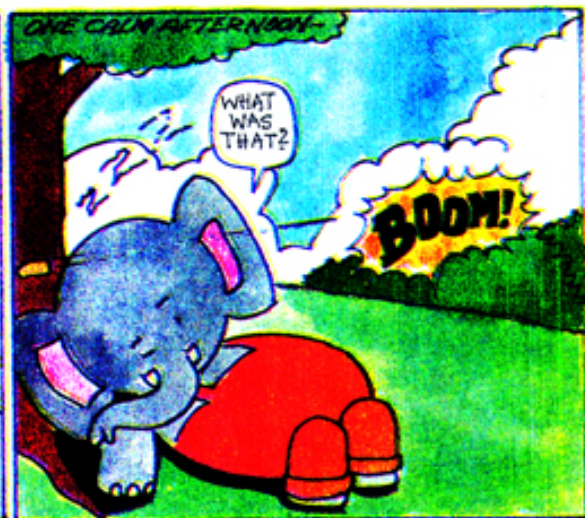
"You shall have the most beautiful voice in the whole forest," he told her, "None will be able to sing like you. Not even your friend. He shall have the harshest cry among all birds."

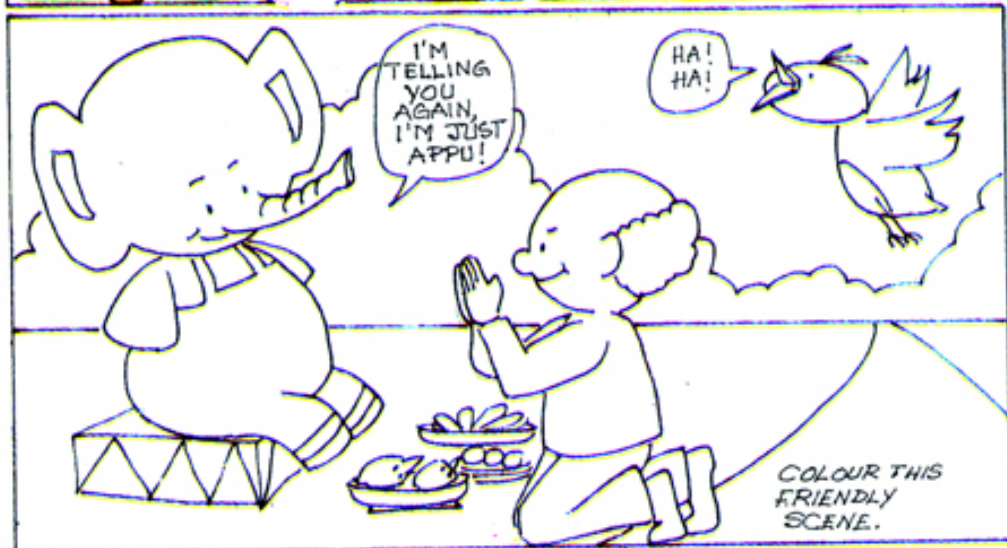
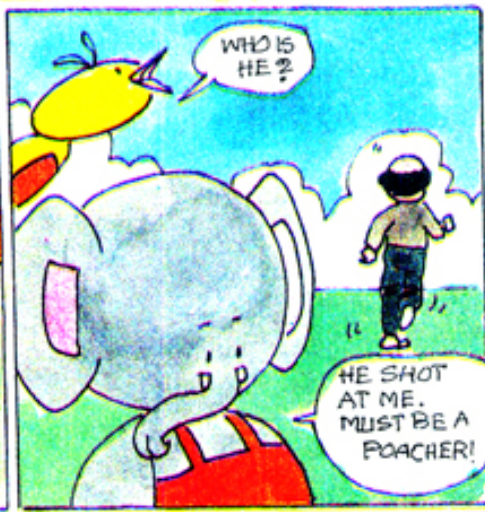
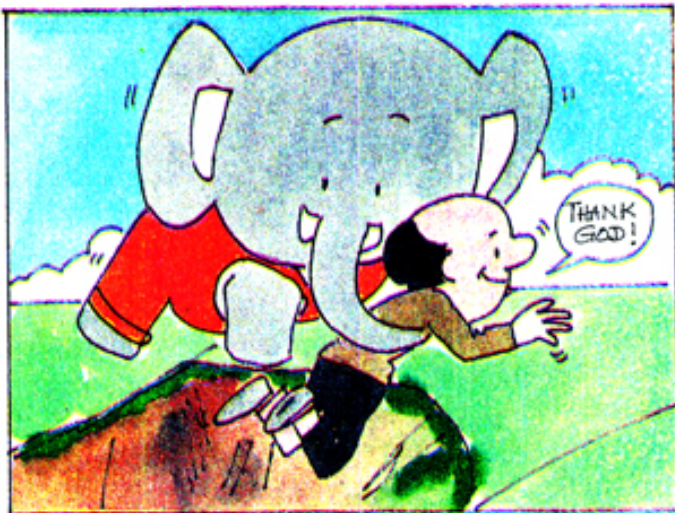
And that's how, the black koel got her beautiful voice.

And that's how, the proud peacock has a most unmusical cry.

**Adapted from a story
sent by
A. Prathyusha, aged 13,
Little Flower School,
Chittoor.**







STORIES FROM OUR READERS

Snoopy, Sowmya and I had just returned from a morning walk, when the phone rang. Before I tell you what happened next, let me introduce Sowmya and Snoopy to you. Sowmya is my cousin whose father was transferred from Delhi to Madras a few days ago. Her family was staying with us till they got a good flat to live in. Snoopy is my little white puppy, presented to me by Sowmya. He has a habit of snooping around, and is a jolly little daredevil!

Well now, let's get back to the telephone call. It was an old friend of papa's and he had invited our family to a dinner party that evening. "We're not coming," Sowmya and I told our parents. They agreed to let us stay at home.

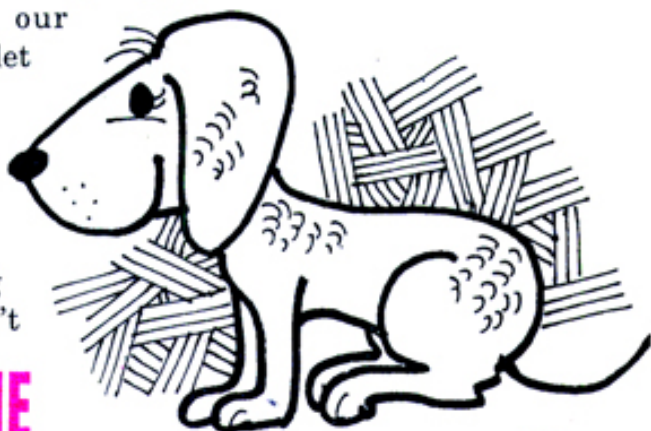
It was fun to have the whole house to our selves. We ate dinner watching VCR! (which wouldn't have been possible if mama had been around!). We played with Snoopy for a little while, and then sent him to the bedroom to sleep. We were about to go upstairs when

the doorbell rang.

"Must be our parents," said Sowmya. She was about to go down to open the door.

"Sowmya, it can't be them. Remember, mama said they would be late!" I reminded her. She looked at me, then at the door, and again at me. We didn't know what to do. But at last we decided to open the door.

"Sowmya, I think it would be better if we brought Snoopy along," I said. But Sowmya thought it didn't matter. And we opened the door.



**THE
GAME!**



was gentle no more. It was hoarse and harsh. I didn't know what to say. I looked at Sowmya. She looked at me, and then at the bedroom. I understood what she meant, and pointed towards the bedroom. But the thief wasn't going to take chances.

"Open the door," he ordered.

I walked quickly and opened the door. But I stepped on the sleeping Snoopy by mistake! Poor Snoopy! He was so furious, that he whined and barked loudly.

Alarmed, the thief ran towards the door. But I quickly sent my skateboard his way. The man was in such a hurry that he didn't notice it. And do you know what happened? Snoopy thought it was a new game and joined in! He jumped on the man and began licking him. Snoopy, poor chap, did not have a violent bone in his body. He thought the thief was a friend. But the startled

A man in a driver's uniform stood there.

"Mr. Murthi (my papa) left some papers here. He asked me to fetch them," he said in a gentle voice. I let him in, and shut the door.

"What papers are they?" I asked and turned, when suddenly, he whipped out a knife from his pocket! A chill ran down my spine! Sowmya was frightened too. She tried to scream, but the man caught hold of her. He covered her mouth with his left hand and held the knife at her throat!

"Hey you!" he said, pointing the knife at me. "Where are all the valuables kept?" His voice



and alarmed thief did not realize this. He thought Snoopy was attacking him!

Sowmya quickly grabbed a vase and hit the man on his head. The man fell back, unconscious. Sowmya and I tied the man up with the clothesline, and stuffed a ball of waste paper into his mouth. We called to our neighbours for help. Our parents returned just then. Everyone was astonished when they

heard how we had tackled the man. The police arrived too.

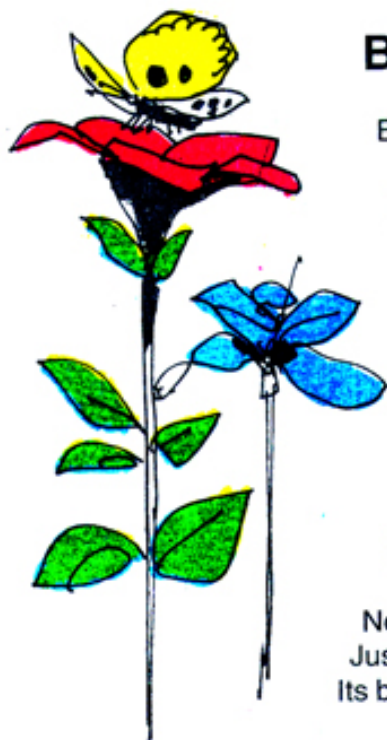
Later, Snoopy, all petted and praised, came running with the skateboard in his mouth. He wanted to play the 'game' again!

"Not me, Snoopy," I laughed, "You'll have to wait for the next thief or trickster!"

**P. Kavitha, aged 11,
Madras - 600 054.**

POETRY

BUTTERFLIES



Butterflies are timid
creatures,
But they have fine
features,
Though they are small,
They're the prettiest of
all!

Perched on a flower,
I go near... wait!
Fluttering away, it
disappears
Into the thin air!

So if you want to
watch a butterfly
Never go near
Just look and admire,
Its beautiful colours.

**Kesha Balakrishnan,
Sri Lanka.**



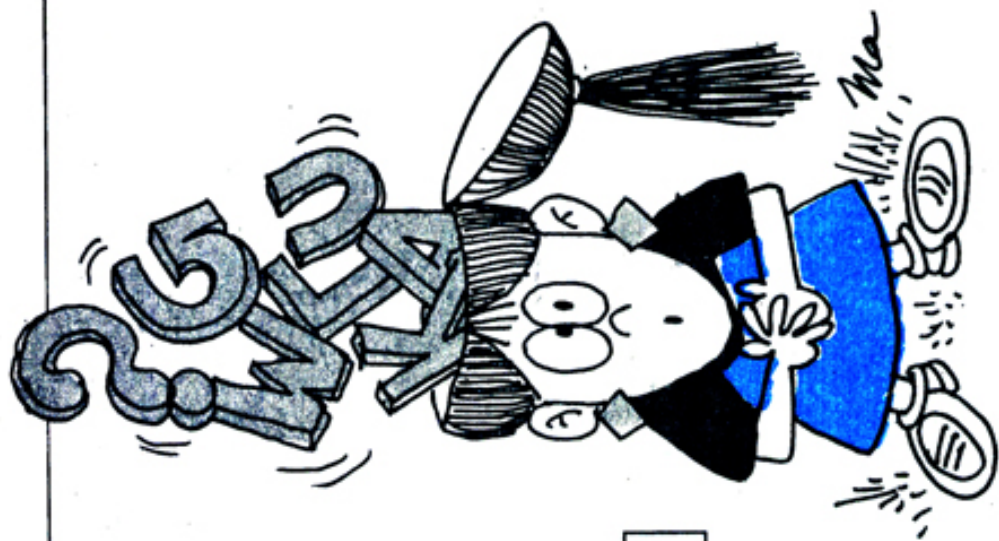
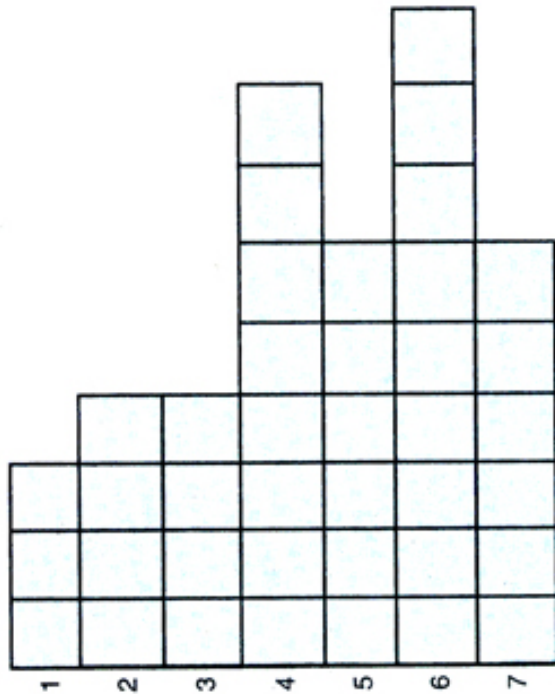
SQUARE DARE!

Fill the squares in the grid with letters, with the help of the clues.

The first column will reveal your hidden code word!

Clues :

1. Take a shot
2. Hot bread maker!
3. Bird of prey or paper?
4. Cover over our heads during rain
5. Not much
6. Travel by air
7. Chatter - chatter!



**Mahalakshmi Krishnan, std VII,
Vani Vidyalaya, Bombay.**

Solution on page 80

SHORTHAND

Has it ever occurred to you that we think faster than we speak and we speak faster than we write?

A great master-mind thought about this a century and a half ago, and devised a system by which the spoken word could be written just as fast, and with perfect ease. The system was English shorthand writing. The master-mind was Sir

Isaac Pitman (1813-1897). He wanted to prove that mankind can write at the same speed with which he speaks.

Even as a young boy, Isaac proved to be a good student. It is said that he used to get up very early in the morning to learn Latin, Greek and English

THE WRITING MIRACLE!



Grammar. He worked hard evening and morning, to improve himself. At the age of 18, he went to the world's first *Teacher's Training College* (The Borough Road Training College). At the age of twenty, he took up the position of Headmaster of one of the British Schools at Barton-on-Humber. Later, he set up his own school at Bath. Isaac was devoted to education. He believed that education was dependant on communication, which in turn was speech in language, literacy in reading, and writing in language.

In the course of his work,

Isaac turned his interest to writing, and at the age of twenty-four, he invented Pitman's shorthand.

He saw what a waste of time longhand was. He asked himself why one had to spend six hours in writing, what can be spoken in one. Why are not written signs as simple as our spoken ones? When the voice utters something at a single stroke, why do we have so many marks to write it out?

He soon realized that there was need for enough characters for the sounds of the English language. He realized that if there were forty sounds in the English language, we would need forty characters in shorthand.

His next surmise was that it was not necessary to restrict writing to one letter at a time, or one sound at a time. A single sign could stand for a number of sounds which together made a syllable.

Thus was founded economy in writing, in which the record of the spoken words of the human voice is placed on paper as fast as it is uttered. The pen and the

fingers keep pace with the organs of speech — throat, mouth and tongue. The result of all this was his book *Stenographic Sound Hand*.

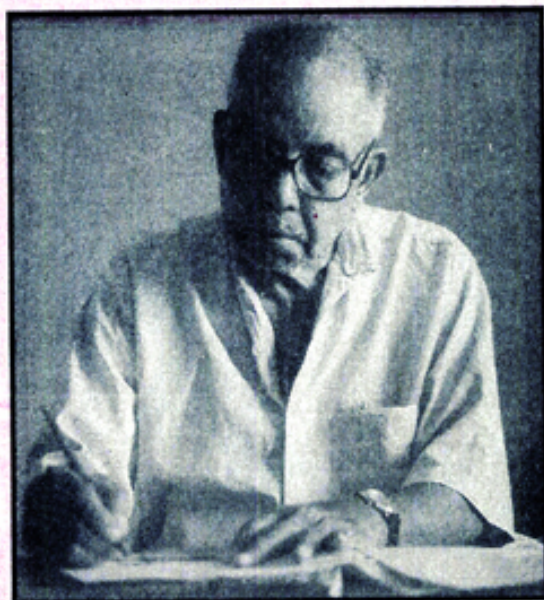
Pitman's shorthand language consisting of thin lines and thick,

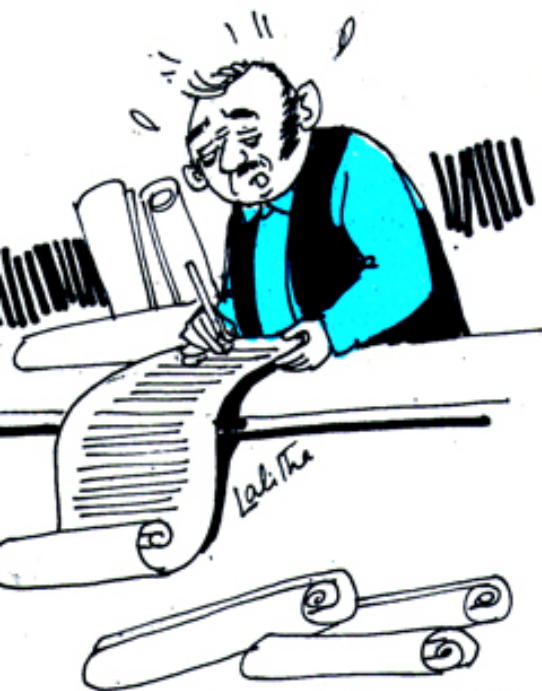


J. Radhakrishnan,
a writer with Gokulam
for many years, passed away
on August 13th last year.

His wife, Visalam,
found notes on
Pitman's shorthand that he had
jotted down. She put together
an article, and sent it to us.

We miss you,
Mr. Radhakrishnan.





strokes, loops, circles and dots proved to be a miracle language. From an obscure place in England, it spread overseas to America and Canada.

It was on February 3, 1886, that Pitman's Shorthand came into India, through Madras. The Board of Pachiappa's Charities ran a commercial school. The school introduced shorthand writing and the work was entrusted to Mr. K.S. Aiyar, the Father of Commercial Education in India. The adaptability of the

system was so remarkable that it led to the development of Hindi and Tamil shorthand writing.

Generations of Indians will remember Pitman for the job opportunities shorthand provided them with, in a country where getting a job is so difficult even today. Pitman's shorthand gave to several thousands in the early days, a means of living. Many a parent who could not afford higher education for his son, made him learn shorthand and typewriting. The humble shorthand writer soon earned for himself the name of a trusted and much sought-after man, because he looked after confidential correspondence. Some of these writers even rose to high positions in course of time.

This field opened up an avenue for women too. They got into secretarial work and became independent persons in their own right.

Perhaps the greatest tribute to Pitman has been from India. It is said that once Pitman him-



Lady (to milkman) : Why are you so late today?

Milkman : What can I do, madam? The water came late!

Y. G. Aparna, aged 12,

Madras - 600 020.

self took down a Sanskrit stanza in shorthand, and read it back as easily as though it were his mother tongue! Another instance has it that Lord Carmichael, a former Governor General of India in the pre-independence days, took down a Bengali translation of the speech he intended to make in shorthand. He rendered it with such precision, that the Bengali audience was left spell-bound.

The late J.J. Goodwin, a mi-

lectures of the Swami, and his patriotic speeches, could never have been preserved. Goodwin worked for the *Madras Mail* (a newspaper), but died at the very young age of twenty-eight.

Pitman pursued his interest in reading, particularly spelling. He popularised the phonetic system for spelling and established an institute at Bath for this. He was knighted three years before his death, in 1897.



grant into America from England in 1895 was another famous shorthand user. He was the one who jotted down the lectures of Swami Vivekananda in the west. But for him, the great Vedantic

Today, Pitman's shorthand has come to stay. In every field — be it business or industry, the shorthand writer has become a necessity. His work calls for a high degree of alertness, and the writer has to use his head as much as his hand.

Sir Isaac Pitman will be remembered as long as the system he has devised survives. And shorthand can never disappear.

All that is needed is a pencil and a piece of paper.

At the memorial at Bath Abbey, stands this tablet :

In memory of Sir Isaac Pitman 1813-1897

Inventor of Pitman's Shorthand.

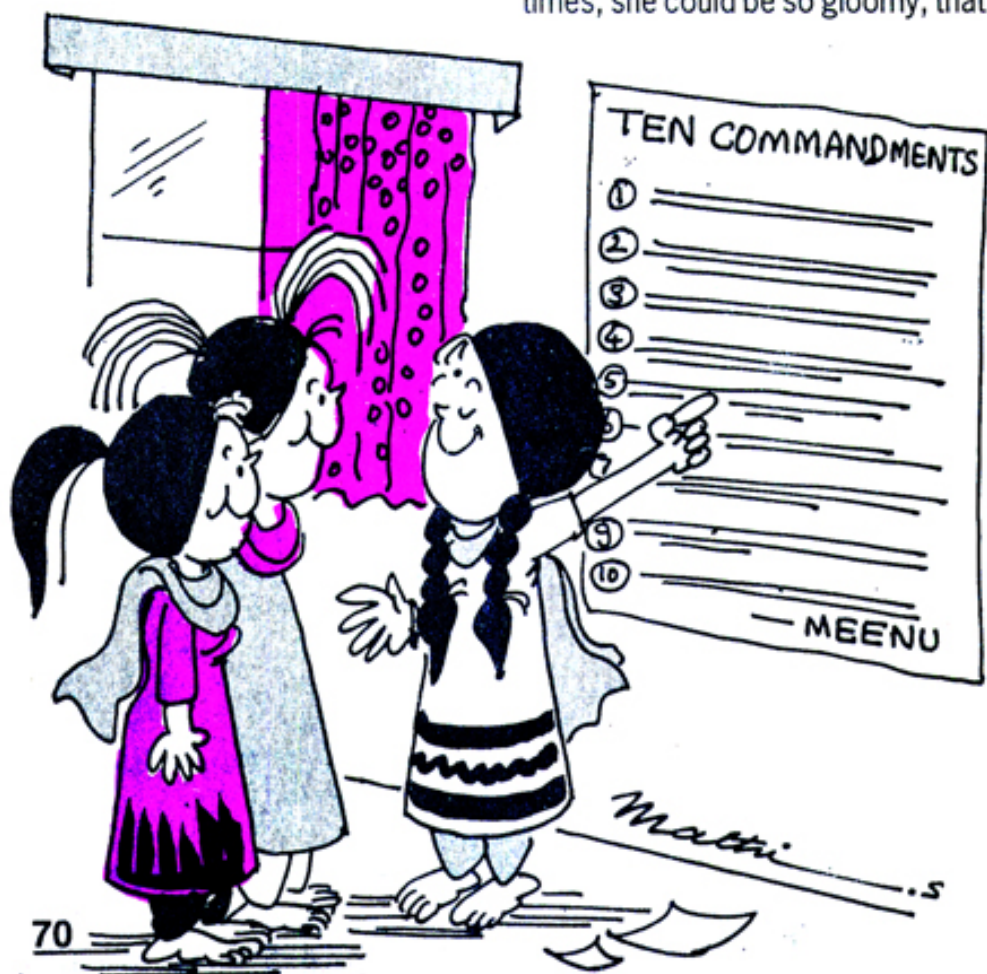
**VISALAM
RADHAKRISHNAN**

VISITING Meenu

It was Saturday. Priyanka and I, were to spend the day in our friend Meenakshi's house. We were determined to have a real good time. Imagine! A full day all on

our own with our friend.

Meenakshi has a pet langur. It was a present from an uncle in Rajasthan. Meenu was a person with a sense of humour, but at times, she could be so gloomy, that





you'd think it was the end of the world.

When we entered her room, we saw a plate of chips and a few sweets on her desk. On one wall, was a poster with 'Ten Commandments' written on it. They were Meenu's own commandments.

I had seen it before, but Priya hadn't.

TEN COMMANDMENTS :

1. *Hardwork is hazardous to health.*

2. *Studying during holidays is injurious to health.*

3. *Watch T.V. That is the only way to become an idiot.*

4. *'Never give, always take. 'cause true joy lies only in taking.*

5. *Wrinkles are hereditary, Parents get 'em from children.*

6. *Never think twice before you do anything.*

7. *Always keep your room dirty. That is the only way to Godliness.*

8. *Always be well prepared for a hit movie quiz, i.e. always watch the hits in movies. You could also watch the so-so ones. And I won't stop you from watching the poor ones.*

9. *Always have many extra-curricular activities like jumping over walls, breaking panes, stealing jam, catching cats by their tails, reading late at night, etc.*

10. Always remain idle. Only then can you be a true person.

Here, I must stop to comment on my friend. Other than the seventh commandment, she disobeys the rest.

We decided to play tennis first. Priya and I had brought our rackets. It was a very curious game. It was a three-player tennis, since we had no net. We stood in a triangle and hit the ball to each other. In a few minutes, we were sick of the game.

So we decided to play a proper game of tennis, and I was to be commentator. The first game was bugging, but soon Priyanka and Meenakshi were playing a furious game. To make it look more like Wimbledon, I perched high on the wall and continued my commentary.

Then it happened. Priya made a mistake. She hit the ball straight at me. Terror-stricken, I ducked. This was followed by a ear-

shattering crash behind me. I turned. The glass pane of a neighbour's window had shattered.

"Let's scoot," said Meenakshi.

But Priya and I thought differently. We went into the neighbour's house and apologised for breaking the pane.

"We'll pay for it aunty," we said.

She was very pleased that we had apologised and sent us away with a smile.

After that, we wandered into the kitchen to help Meenu's mom cut some vegetables. Bored with that, we resorted to chess. Meenu and I played the first game. When she realized she was losing, Meenu said, "Sushi, I have a bad headache. Let's stop the game right here."

So chess was over.

"Lunch ready!" Meenu's mom called out. Were we hungry! We wolfed down a delicious lunch of *puri, sabji, pulao*, salad and *papad*, followed by ice-cream.

Mmm.... No three guesses what we did next. We slept. For two hours! It was three o'clock when we

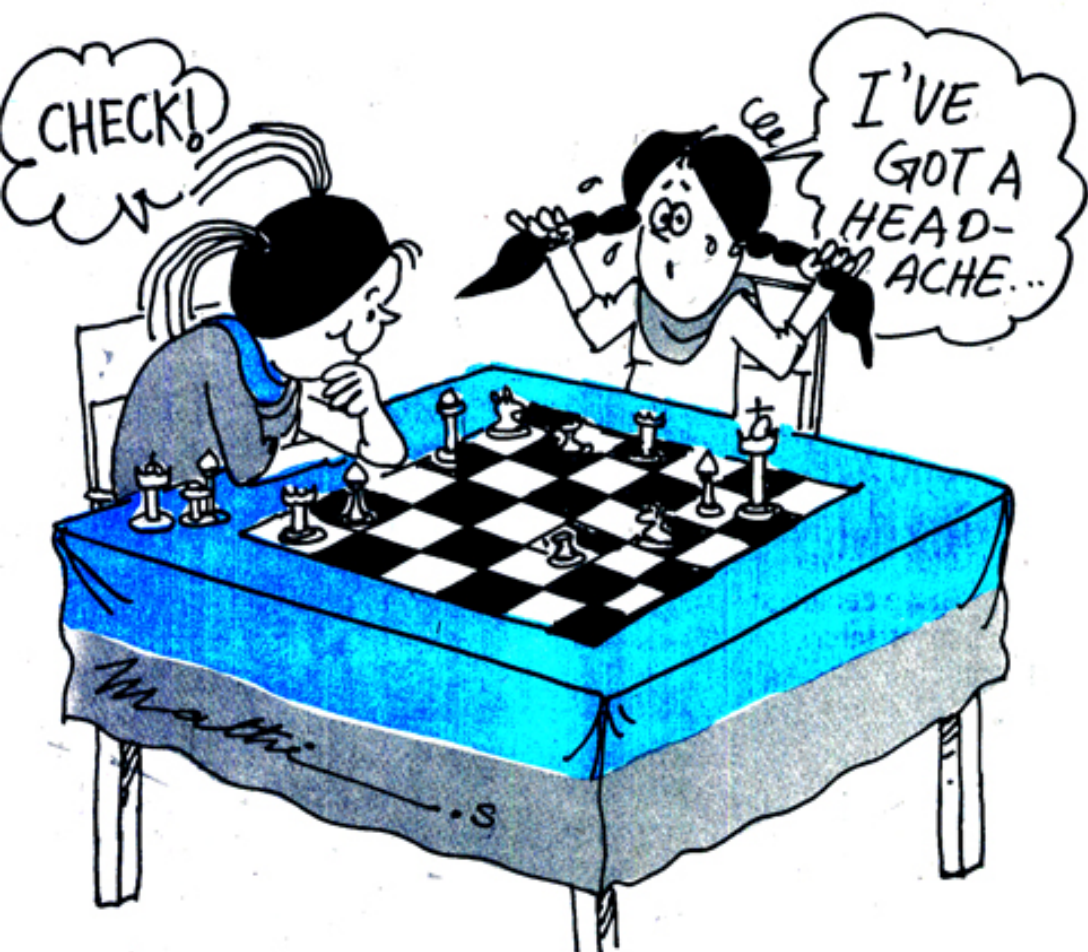


Ram : My father has Jawaharlal Nehru's watch.

Suresh : My father has Tippu Sultan's sword.

Umesh : My father has Adam's apple!

Sunayana, aged 10,
Bangalore - 55.



woke up.

"What delicacy can we have for tiffin?" My thoughts were rudely broken by Micky (have you forgotten the langur?) who ran off with the outhouse keys. The outhouse was Meenu's lab, and the keys were precious!

We chased Micky, who perched on a high branch of the mango tree in the backyard. After a lot of coaxing and cajoling, Micky threw the keys down. They fell straight into the gutter. We fished them out, washed them, and trooped to the outhouse.

After a lot of abortive experiments (the last one frightened us out of our wits), we went into the house.

We were in for a nice surprise. Meenu's dad had brought home a video cassette. It was *Sholay**! We thanked him and watched it mesmerised (don't ask me what's so mesmerising about it.)

Soon, the day was done, and it was time to say goodbye. I think Micky was the saddest to see us go.

**Lakshmi Balaraman, aged 13,
Holy Angels Anglo Indian H.S.S.,
Madras.**

STORIES FROM OUR READERS IN TWO PARTS

There
was
another
sob,
followed
by two
sniffs.

ANUSHA'S VALENTINE

PART - I

"Have you seen Mrs. Doubtfire?" asked Divya, shifting herself to a more comfy position in her chair.

"Yah! Superb movie! Actually, yesterday, my cousins had come, so...."

"Will you stop talking?" said a weary, irate voice. The girls looked up. It was Prashant, their class-leader.

"We are only whispering," said Rashmi. "Okay, listen yaar, you know that Priya lives close to my...."



RIDDLES

Q: What is a man who says no to everything called?

A: A 'Noman'.

**Suma, aged 10,
Bangalore.**



Q: How did the elephant get into the car?

A: By opening the door!



Q: In a big meeting of forest animals, which animal was absent?

A: The elephant, because it was inside the car.

**M. Vivek Shenoy,
Jayalakshmipuram -
570 012.**



with the class when they were in this mood.

"Turn to page 33 in your English text. We are going to do 'Amber' today."

'A mber' was about a dog which had a disease called *Demodectic Mange*. At the end of the story, Amber had to be put to sleep, because she was suffering from a disease that was incurable. On the whole, it was a sad and touching story.

"Ankita, stand up and read," said Mrs. Ramaswamy. Ankita got up and began to read.

Mrs. Ramaswamy interrupted after a while, to explain something in grammar.

"The participles and gerunds....," she began.

"Can I have some water, miss?" wailed a voice.

"Who is that?" she asked sharply.

"Nitin, Miss!" shouted the whole class, seizing the opportunity to scream.

"Hush," said Mrs. Ramaswamy, "Stand-up, Nitin."

Nitin stood up, wondering what was going to befall him.

"Nitin," said Mrs. Ramaswamy, sternly, "When you want to ask something, you put up your hand. And you do not interrupt me while I speak!"

"Sorry, miss," said Nitin, carelessly.

"Now sit down!"

Nitin sat down and immediately his hand shot up.

"Now what is it?" asked Mrs. Ramaswamy, exasperated.

"Can I have water, miss?"

Mrs. Ramaswamy had to smile.

"Yes, you may. Ankita, continue reading." Ankita stood up.

"Sister Rose, I'm afraid it is all over with Amber", she read on. "The kindest thing would be to put her to sleep."

A sob sounded from somewhere. "Sister Rose was shocked. 'Oh, well,' she said...."

"Bring
Amber
back to
life,



There was another sob, followed by two sniffs. "Now who is crying?" asked Mrs. Ramaswamy, wondering what was wrong with her class that morning.

Before the class could scream, "Anusha, miss!" the bell rang. Mrs. Ramaswamy hurriedly wished the class and scuttled off.

"Why are you crying, Anusha?" asked Gayathri, immediately.

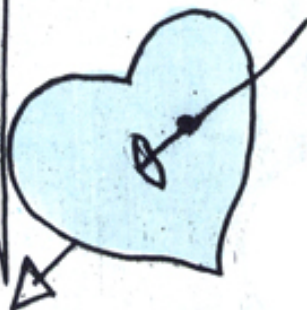
"Why is she crying?" enquired Karthik. Although his nose was short, it poked into everything.

"Amber, yaar," sputtered Anusha, tears spilling out and splashing onto her desk. "Amber, she died!"

The others roared with laughter.

"Don't be so sick, Anusha," cried Aditya.

then
I'll
talk to
you."





Customer : Of what use is this new super computer?

Salesman : It can do half your job for you.

Customer : Great! I'll take two!

**K. Radhika and B. Ramya, aged 13,
Madras - 600 034.**

guffawing. "Fancy crying over a silly fictitious dog!"

"It isn't fiction," said Anusha, defiantly. "It is a true story, it says so in the book."

"Pooooooooor Amber!" sneered Karthik. "Don't cry over spilt milk!"

"None of you have a heart," wept Anusha, dramatically. "Not one! And if you have, it is made of stone."

The others laughed still more loudly at this.

Divya suddenly remembered that the Maths teacher had announced a Graph test the previous day.

"Ay, Anusha teach me this sum no?" she begged, showing her a book.

"No, impossible," said Anusha, pushing away the book. "Bring Amber back to life, then I'll talk to you."

The others stared at Anusha. She could go all filmy and dramatic when she liked.

"You've gone crazy, bonkers," said Preethi, at last. "Stark raving

mad."

"It's okay," said Anusha, obstinately. "Just bring Amber back to life. Then I'll talk to you."

The maths teacher walked in and set up a snappy revision test. And then as the class sighed, groaned and puzzled over the Maths test, Preethi got a brilliant idea that would soon put an end to Anusha's silliness.

"Divya, Rashmi, Gayathri!" called Preethi, as soon as school was over.

Gayathri was laughing crazily over a joke and came staggering over to her.

"What?" she asked.

"Tomorrow is Feb. 14th," said Preethi.

"So?" asked Rashmi.

"It is Valentine's Day and people send cards to each other," said Preethi, grinning. "Let's send one to Anusha and write from 'Your Long lost Amber' or something like that!"

"Yes," cried Gayathri, jumping with excitement. "Ooolyol! So funny it will be!"

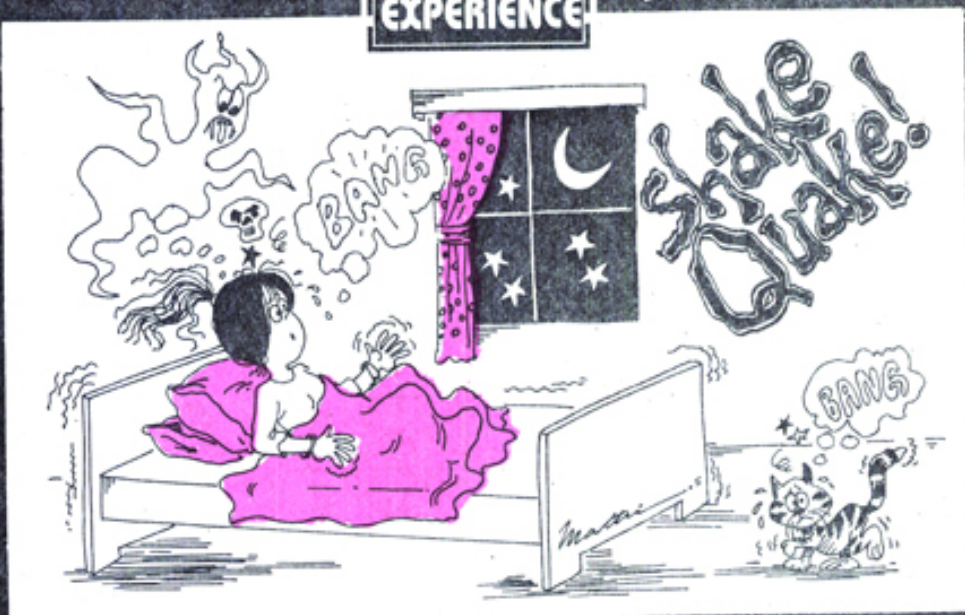
"Yes," said Preethi, showing all her thirty-two white teeth. "Divya and I are going to 'Landmark' today and see if we don't buy a really superb card!"

(TO BE CONCLUDED)

Yamini N., Std. IX,

**Padma Seshadri B.B.S.S.S.,
Madras.**

EXPERIENCE



My parents and I had just returned after watching an evening show at the cinema. The movie had been about a poltergeist, or a ghost that moved things and shook the house.

After eating our dinner, we went to sleep. It was past midnight. I couldn't sleep, for I was thinking about the film. All of a sudden, I could hear vessels falling over, and banging about in the kitchen. It seemed to me, that the ground was shaking too. Was it a dream? I pinched myself.

But it was too real. I was terrified.

I ran to my parents' bedroom. By now, the shaking had stopped, and all was calm and quiet. I woke my parents up, and told them about the strange

things that had happened. "It's that film we saw," my parents scolded me, "Now go to sleep."

"You're right," I mumbled, "I was quite frightened after watching that movie."

I crept back into bed, trembling, pale and frightened.

The next morning, I picked up my cup of coffee, and began to read the newspaper.

Earthquake! screamed the headlines. I remembered the falling vessels, and the shaking floor of last night. So, it had been the earthquake, not a ghost or a poltergeist.

The earthquake had been very severe in many places and a lot of people had lost their lives.

I hadn't dreamed it after all.

**M. Rashmi, aged 12,
Belthangady - 574 214.**

VIEWPOINT

Dear Editor,

Robberies and thefts have become very common nowadays. People are being robbed in broad daylight.

Houses are broken into and people are killed if they resist. Nothing is safe anymore, for this happens everywhere.

R. Gita,
Madras - 600 024.



Dear Editor,

I completely disagree with Ambika Shivadas (December issue). Man should not kill helpless animals for his own benefit.

Recently, when so many people were infected with plague, did we kill them? We made sure that they got the right treatment and tried our best to cure them.

Similarly, we should make sure that dogs are inoculated against rabies.

S. Soumya, aged 14,
Vidya Mandir,
Madras.

Dear Editor,

I disagree with Syed Imran (November issue). We may wear jeans and shirts, but inside we remain the same. We pray to our Gods, celebrate our festivals, and live the

Indian way.

Just because our clothes change, the mind doesn't.

Neha Thakkar,
New Bombay - 400 073.

Dear Editor,

We are becoming westernised. But why point fingers at women only? Haven't we seen men wearing ear-rings and sporting long hair or pony-tails?

V. Mythili, aged 10,
Madras and
Shweta Mishrikotkar, std VIII,
Mount Carmel School,
Nagpur.

Dear Editor,

We are wearing westernised clothes today, not because we want to ape the west, but because they are more comfortable.

S. Shilpa aged 16,
Bangalore and
Soumya Kamakshi, aged 15,
Bombay.



How creative are you in daily life? No, I am not asking you if you are a good painter, writer or a poet. Think — do you enjoy the challenges that everyday life brings? Let me give you examples.

Mahesh was a good student. But he was not very keen on homework, classwork or project work. His heart sank everytime his teacher announced a project or a test.

Vidya loved to sing. She enrolled herself in music class. But soon, she came to hate the rou-

tine of walking all the way to class and back, and did not enjoy singing at all.

Mahesh obviously avoids challenges and Vidya found routine boring. What is needed from both of them is fresh thinking on how they should approach their activities.

Mahesh could tackle his schoolwork like a soldier at the warfront. And Vidya can invent many games, watch people around her, on her way to music class.

Being Just ME!

Studying without a break can be tiring...



With a little chalk, I can create...



WON, a self-learning skills programme in Delhi. Now based in Madras, Rajiv Narang and his team have an office at R. M. Towers on Chamiers Road.

"Many parents think that being creative is to be good at dancing or painting, etc.," says Sandhya.

How many of us think nothing of ourselves just because we have no real talent? But what exactly is talent?

Talent, as we think of it today, is a special skill that one is good at.

We very often hear comments like, "She has inborn talent." "She has a natural talent for..."

Talent, is a skill which we love to do, and which we are good at. We make this skill finer by practise. Talent grows or dies, according to the interest shown in the skill.

Thus, if you love to paint, and you are good at it, it will not develop further if you don't take interest in it.

This is true of all the things we do in daily life.

"I may be a good dancer," says Sandhya, "But I may not be a

The world around us is interesting all the time. Nothing really remains the same — there are so many things taking place. An alert and creative mind can make the best of it.

"Just suppose there's no bread or *dosa* batter at home for breakfast," says Sandhya Narang of EREHWON, Madras, "I can look at it two ways. I can see it as a problem. Or I can take up the challenge and create a different dish with the ingredients I have."

Creativity, in short, is to make the best of what you have.

Sandhya and her husband Rajiv Narang founded EREH-

• Simple games can be challenging



good cook."

A little creative thinking will make all activity fun and

be regularly followed.

Studies too, can be approached in many different ways (see box).

TEST YOUR CREATIVITY

Here is one example of how you can use creativity in your studies.

* Every time you complete learning a lesson, give yourself a point.

* Add up the number of points every day.

* Speak to your parents about this point system. You can ask them to give you a treat each time the total exceeds a particular set figure.

Or here is another alternative method.

plete one lesson (or how many you set yourself) everyday.

* Give yourself a point for every lesson completed in the loved subject column, two points for every lesson you complete in the so-so subjects, and two points for completing each lesson in the subjects that you dislike.

* Your rewards, of course, depend on the effort that you take.

Here's a way you can enjoy watching television or reading books, just that little more.

* Watch your favourite programme in a group with your friends.

* Take turns to question each other on the minute details of what you saw on the small screen.

For instance, you can ask your friends the colour of a certain actress's handkerchief, or even the colour of the nail polish she wore!

* T.V. watching thus, becomes a keen creative mental exercise. I am sure your friends will enjoy it too.

* You can try this same exercise with the books you have read, if you and your friends share the same reading tastes.

* Divide the subjects that you enjoy reading, the subjects that you don't mind reading and the subjects that you hate, into three columns on a sheet of paper.

* Make up your mind to com-



Take time off with pet.

THOUGHT

There were just ten minutes left for the first period to begin, and I had still to pack my books, and do the homework (which had completely slipped out of my mind yesterday). I made it to college ten minutes late, and luck (unusually) favoured me. The teacher was on leave.

I thought of writing that morning's hurry and scurry with a little exaggeration here and there, and send it to some magazine. (That's the kind of thing that is published now-a-days isn't it?) But back at home, I had to prepare for a test, and so I postponed my plans.

But the day I sat down to write, I felt foolish to have even thought of it. This is not the first time that I had planned great things, and ended up doing nothing! I guess many of you have had similar experiences.

I am of the belief that any idea, however weak it may seem, is worthy enough to give a try. Who knows, it may even change our lives forever! But once you postpone it, you will lose your enthusiasm in carrying it out. So next time you think of something new and original, do it right away!

Some minutes ago, I had planned to write something entirely different. But it has ended up in this... May be I will write it some other day when I have more time. Oops...!!

Small Truths



V. Bindu,
Trivandrum
- 695 009.

Which Go **UNNOTICED**



RECIPE

VEGETABLE PICKLE

You need :

½ a cauliflower
 ¼ kg. peas
 125 gms. carrot
 125 gms. beans
 1 big raw
 mango
 24 limes

1 tsp. fenugreek
 powder
 1 tsp. turmeric
 powder
 4 tbsp. chilli powder
 1 teaspoon asafoetida
 powder
 2 cups gingelly oil

How to make it :

Wash and clean all vegetables. Peel carrots and dice finely. Shell peas, string the beans and cut them. Chop the mango into small cubes, and cut the cauliflower.

Measure out salt into a bowl. Squeeze lime juice into it. Mix the vegetables into it and keep aside.

Heat a *kadai* with a little oil, on the fire. Add fenugreek, turmeric, chilli and asafoetida powders and roast well. Turn off the fire. Add the rest of the oil, and carefully add the vegetables to it.

Bottle the pickle when it cools.

The pickle is ready to be eaten two days later.

Anagha Suresh, aged 11,
 The School (K.F.I.)
 Madras.



Bus Conductor : Tickets please.

Ram : I want a full ticket for my grandmother and one half for me.

Conductor : You fool! You have a moustache and you want a half ticket?

Ram : Then give me a full ticket. A half ticket for my grandmother as she has no moustache...

Jones Augustine, aged 10,

Bangalore - 84.

Hello readers! Wish you all a *Happy New Year!* In the last two issues we saw the history of computers and how the modern computer works. Let us now move on to

ON SOFTWARES

the different types of softwares.

In the previous issue, we saw that softwares are classified as System, Utility and Application softwares.

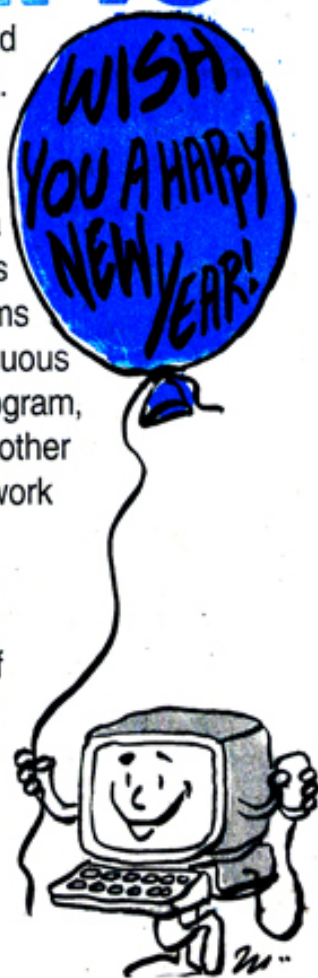
AND

SYSTEMS

As you all know,

computers can do nothing by themselves and requires the support of softwares in order to work. Computers, as you know consists of monitors, keyboards, floppy disk drives, etc. To integrate these components and function together as a computer system, we need master control programs called OPERATING SYSTEMS. Operating systems (OS) are system softwares which permit the continuous operation of a computer system from program to program, with minimum amount of operator intervention. In other words, the OS enables the system's hardware to work with the user's programs.

Early computer systems did not have an operating system. These machines were hand operated by the programmer. Thus, the speed of processing was restricted to the speed at which the harassed operator could interpret and execute his operating instructions. These instructions were frequently ill-defined. But today's



THE CARD, THE WEAVER, THE COMPUTER

Punched cards were used as the standard computer input device till a few decades back. But it is interesting to know that punched cards were actually invented to control mechanical looms. It was Herman Hollerith and his census machine (Gokulam Nov. issue) that made the use of cards as a medium of data processing.

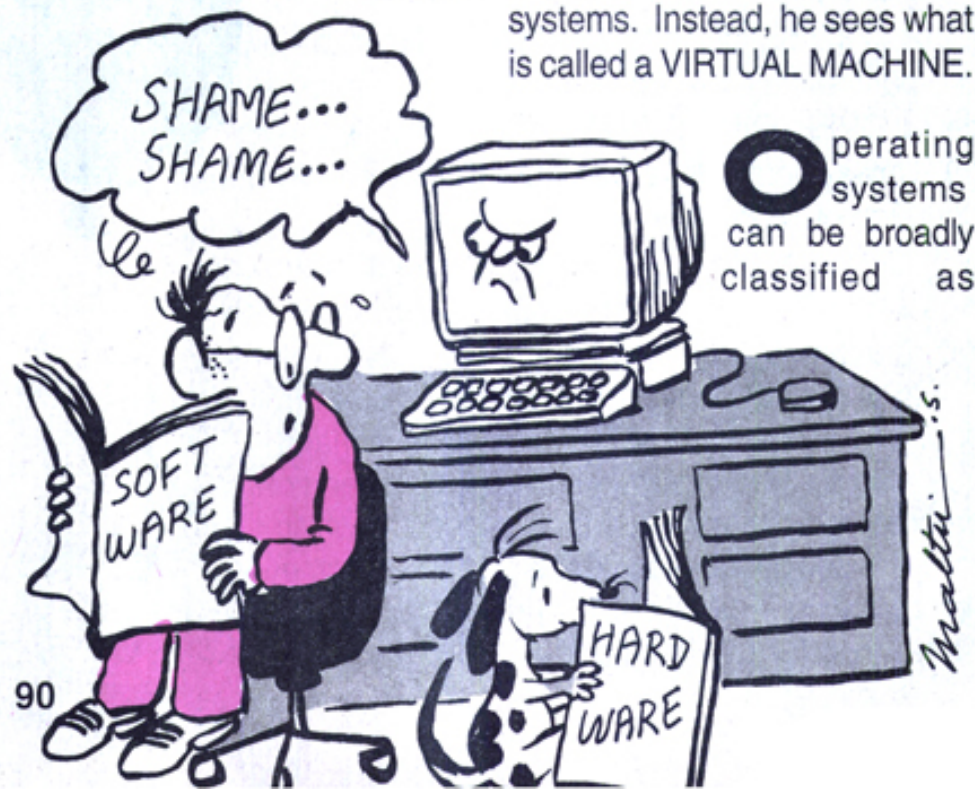
France was an early leader in elegant cloth weaving. A number of inventors had tried to automate the process to lower costs. In 1725, Basile Bouchon devised a method of

selecting the threads automatically, using paper tapes with holes punched on them. Later, in 1728, a French weaver named Falcon improved the loom, replacing the paper roll with an endless chain of stiff punched cards strung together. In 1745, Jacques de Vaucanson designed an experimental loom. This was modified by Joseph Marie Jacquard.

The story of Jacquard is rather interesting. He designed a loom to weave designs under the control of punched cards. The first version was burnt by an angry mob. But he had gained the interest of Napoleon, the emperor of France. Jacquard was summoned to the palace and was asked to study Vaucanson's loom.

operating systems are smart enough, so that the user is no

longer concerned with the physical details of computer systems. Instead, he sees what is called a VIRTUAL MACHINE.



With the government's support he designed another loom, and was very successful. He brought prosperity to the city of Lyons. A monument was erected to him at the very spot where the first loom was burnt.

The punched card began to be used as an input medium for computers. Input data were first recorded by punching holes on a card. This card would then be fed into electro-mechanical machines, that de-coded the

holes and processed the data. For decades, this card was the most popular data entry device. But punched cards for computers passed into history on December 1984, when IBM closed the last of its punched card manufacturing systems.

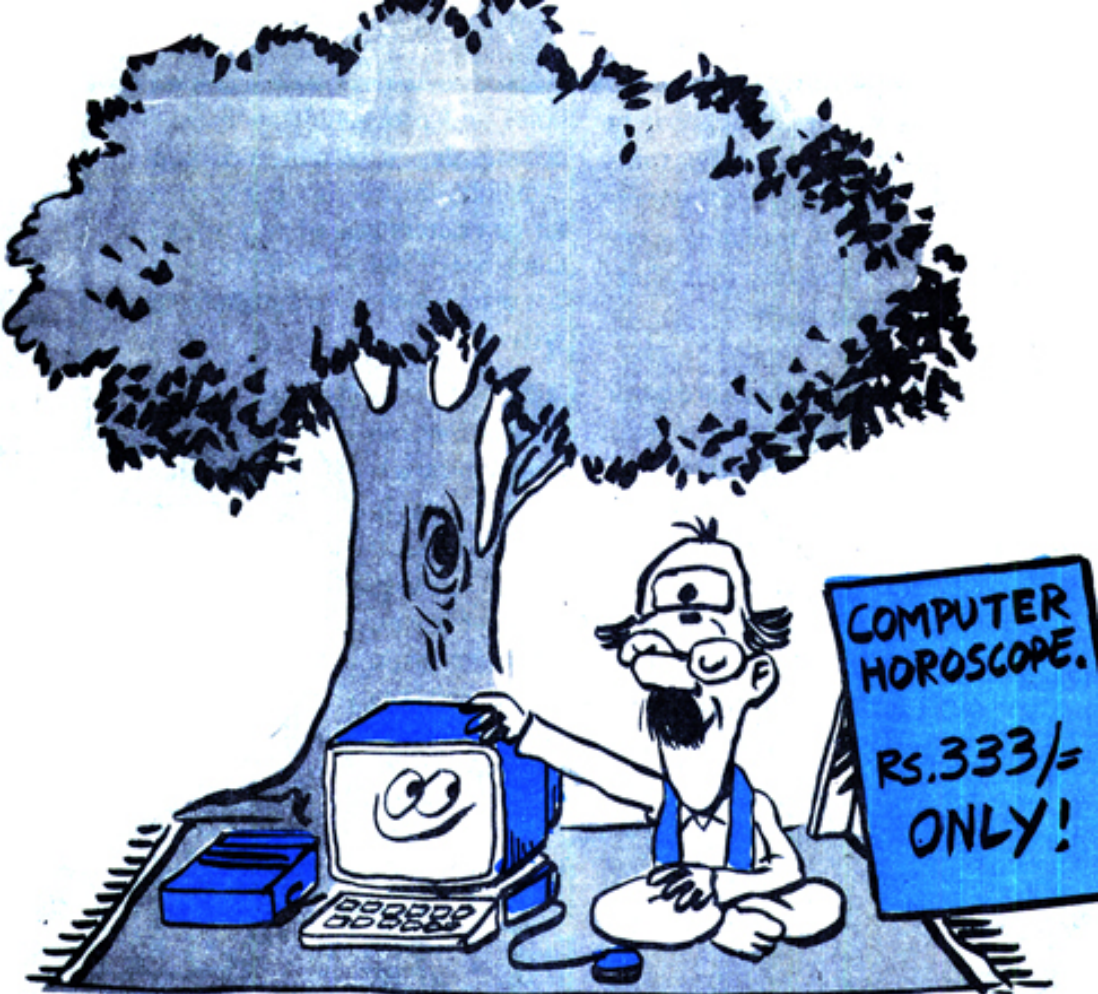
But today, the punched card is still in use in other fields. It is used in banks as teller cards, and in factories, to record the exit and entry of employees.



single-user and multi-user operating systems. Single user operating systems are the type of which allows only one person to work at a time. Whereas the multi-user allows a number of users to work through several terminals attached to the system. MS-DOS (Microsoft Disk Operating System) and UNIX are the examples of single-user and multi-user operating systems respectively.

Operating systems cannot communicate with all the input/output devices. Softwares are written, which will enable the operating system to communicate with the devices. These softwares are known as the device drivers.

One of the factors that makes computers more popular, is the greater availability of Application Programs. An Application program is one that



has been written to control the processing of a particular task. Programs written for generating bills in a supermarket is an application program. Computer users can now choose from thousands of pre-written application packages.

There are softwares which are used to perform a wide range of tasks like word processing, managing datas, etc. Softwares which enable us to do these jobs are known as Utility softwares. dBASE III plus, Word Star and

Lotus 1-2-3 are the popular utility softwares.

See you again next month. We'll be talking about some things that causes a lot of problems to computer users.

COMPUTER POINT, Adyar.

If you have any queries on computers, write to :

**Computer Point,
Education and Consultancy
Division, No. 60, III Main Road,
Kasthurba Nagar, Madras - 20**

HOW OLD ARE YOU?



I was in the sixth standard, and it was my birthday. I wanted to give sweets to Mrs. Sucheetha, my friend Niranjana's mother. Mrs. Sucheetha taught the college adjoining our school.

So, after school, I went over to the college.

Mrs. Sucheetha was speaking on 'Night of the Scorpion' a poem by Nizzim Ezekeil. She was telling the class, what a hold superstitious beliefs held over rural people. I excused myself, and she smiled.

"Come in, dear," she said.

"Miss," I said, "It's my birthday today."

She wished me, and took a sweet.

"How old are you?" she asked

me."

Smiling widely, I replied, "My grandma has told me never to reveal my age on my birthday."

The whole class began to laugh.

My smile vanished, for I did not understand.

I am in college now. Mrs. Sucheetha remembers this incident and explains why the class had laughed.

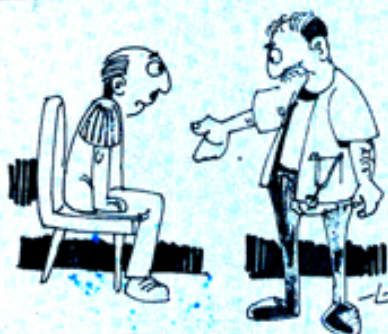
"There I was," she says, "Telling them about superstitions, and you come right in, and tell me what your grandma told you."

Radha Devi,
Nirmala College, Coimbatore.

Patient : Doctor! I feel I am a cactus plant.

Doctor : Don't worry! I'll send you to a desert!

P. Rekha, aged 12,
Kendriya Vidyalaya,
Kolar Gold Fields - 563 115.



STORIES FROM OUR READERS

Jane and Smitha were best friends. They studied in the eighth standard. But they had very different natures indeed. Smitha was a friendly person and mixed with everybody. Jane, however, liked to keep to herself, and was possessive about Smitha too. She did not want Smitha to have any other friend but herself.

"I don't like you being too friendly with other girls," she told Smitha one day, during lunch-break. Smitha was surprised.

"Why shouldn't I?" she asked.

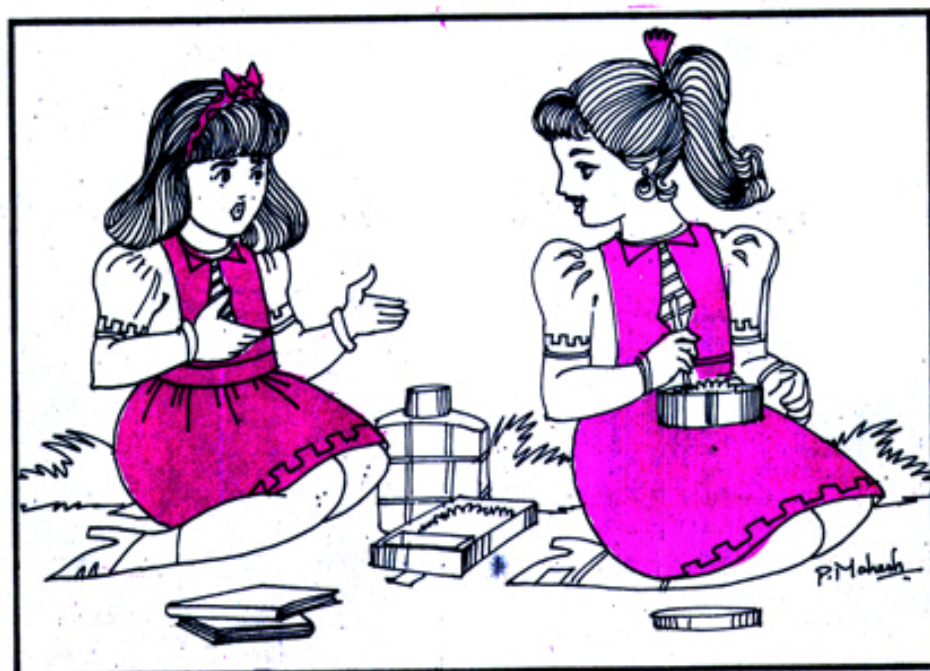
"I don't like them to be your friends," explained Jane, "Treat them as your classmates, that's all."

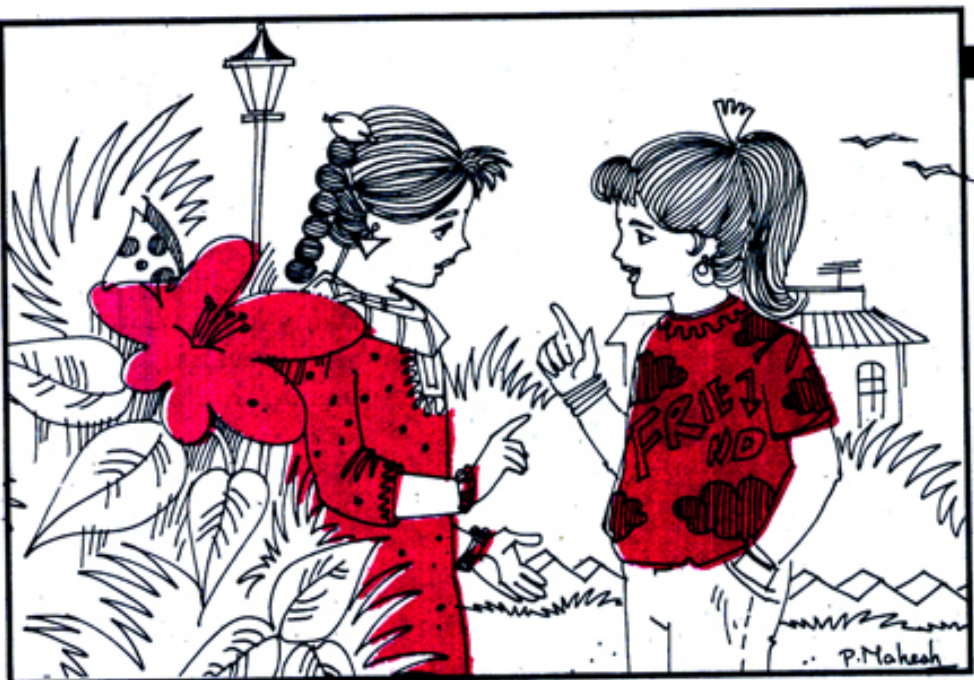
Smitha was quite irritated. She had not realized that her friend was not quite sociable, till now.

"I've got to change her attitude," she thought.

That evening, walking home with Smitha, Tina said, "Smitha! You seem troubled about something."

MAKING FRIENDS





"Jane is a very nice girl," defended Smitha, "She's an introvert, that's all."

Tina could

WITH JANE

"Yes, I am," Smitha admitted, and she told Tina about Jane's behaviour."

"I don't know what to do about it," Smitha admitted, "She's too possessive about me, and does not want to mix with others."

"In that case," Tina said, "Why do you remain her friend?"

"What are you saying?" demanded Smitha, "Jane is my friend, and I can't ditch her just because she's got some bee in her bonnet."

"Well...." Tina pondered, "You have a point...."

not forget Smitha's problem. The more she thought about it, she decided she must help Smitha somehow.

The next morning at school, Tina went upto Smitha and Jane, and began to make conversation. Smitha talked cheerfully as usual, and Jane looked away as if bored, in her usual manner.

During lunch-break, Tina along with Sonia, tried to talk to Jane, but it was useless. Jane answered their questions



That evening, as Smitha and Jane were packing their bags to go home, Sharmila waved and said, "Hey, you two! How about coming to my house to lunch on Sunday? It's my birthday and I've invited Asha, Rizwana, Sonia, Rubeena, Tina and a few others."

Before Smitha could reply, Jane answered, "Sure! We'll be there!"

Smitha could hardly believe her ears. But she was glad too. Her friend was beginning to mix with the others!

without interest, and the two had to give up.

So Sonia and Tina began an animated discussion about their homes, and soon, a group of chattering girls formed around them. Looking at them, Smitha told Jane, "Let's join them."

Without giving her friend a chance to answer, Smitha caught her by her arm, and dragged her into the group.

Jane felt very odd at first. But the way the girls spoke, the jokes they exchanged, and the fun they had really impressed her.

"What a lot of fun they're having," she thought.

Back at home, Smitha rang Tina up to tell her about Jane's transformation.

"Thanks a lot Tina," she said, "I know you helped bring about this."

"You talk as if I have achieved a miracle," Tina joked, "And mere thanks is not enough. You will have to give me a really generous treat."

"Well," Smitha answered, "It'll be Jane's treat this time."

**Merlita A. Pinto, aged 14,
St. Anne's H.S.,
Mangalore.**

One stolen moment....



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